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THE
A R G U M E N T

F R O M

Apostolic Tradition,

In Favour of

I N F A N T - B A P T I S M ,

W I T H

Others, advanced in a late Pamphlet,

C A L L E D

*The Baptism of Infants a reasonable
Service, &c. consider'd ;*

A N D A L S O

An ANSWER to a *Welch Clergyman's*
twenty Arguments for Infant-Baptism.

To which are added

The DISSENTERS REASONS for separating
from the Church of *England*.

Occasioned by the said WRITER.

By J O H N G I L L, D. D.

L O N D O N :

Printed and Sold by G. KEITH, at *Mercers Chapel, Cheap-side* ;
and J. ROBINSON, at *Dock-head, Southwark*. MDCCLI.

[Price One Shilling.]

THE
ARGUMENT

FROM

Apollonius Taurinus

in a letter

1774-1775-1776

to the

Order of the Council in a letter



The British Museum

AND A

An Answer to a Letter of the Council

To which are added

The Letters of the Council

Ordered by the Council

By JOHN GIBB, Esq.

1776

Printed and Sold by J. G. Kearsley, at the Sign of the

Three Crowns, in Pall Mall



T H E
A R G U M E N T
F R O M
Apostolic Tradition, &c.

IT is with reluctance I enter again into the controversy about baptism; not from any consciousness either of the badness or weakness of the cause I am engaged in; but partly on account of other work upon my hands, which I chose not to be interrupted in; and partly because I think there has been enough written already, to bring this controversy to an issue; and it is not our fault that it has not been closed long ago; for there has been scarce any thing wrote by us these *fifty* years past, but in our own defence; our *Pædobaptist* brethren being continually the aggressors, and first movers of the controversy; they seem as if they were not satisfied with what has been done on their side, and therefore are always attempting either to put the controversy upon a new foot, or to throw the old arguments into a new

B form;

form ; and even say the same things over and over again, to make their minds, and the minds of their people easy, if possible. If persons are not content to search the scriptures, and form their judgment of this matter by them, there has been enough published on both sides the question to determine themselves by ; and we are willing things should rest here : but this is our case ; if we reply to what is written against us, then we are litigious persons, and lovers of controversy ; tho' we only rise up in our own vindication, for which surely we are not to be blamed ; and if we make no reply, then what is written is unanswerable by us, and we are triumphed over.

No less than half a dozen pamphlets have been published upon this subject, within a very little time ; without any provocation from us, that I know of. Some of them indeed are like *musbrooms*, that rise up and die almost as soon as they live ; it has been the *luck* of the pamphlet before me, to live a little longer ; and which is cried up as an unanswerable one, for no other reason that I can see, but because it has not yet been answered in form ; otherwise the arguments advanced in it, have been answered before it was in being ; for there is nothing new throughout the whole of it. Is there any one argument in it, but what has been brought into the controversy before ? not one. Is the date of infant-baptism as it appears from the writings of the antients, from antiquity, for which this performance is mostly boasted of, carried one year, one month, one day, one hour, or moment higher, than it was before ? not one. Is there any one passage of the antients
cited,

cited, which has not been produced and been under consideration before? not one. What then has this Gentleman been doing? just nothing at all. However an answer would have been made to him before this time, had not some things in Providence prevented. My late worthy friend the Reverend Mr. *Samuel Wilson*, intended to have drawn up one, as he signified to me; for which reason, I did not give myself the trouble to read this pamphlet: His view was first to publish his *Manual*, and then to take this under consideration; but he dying before the publication of the former, prevented his design; nor did he, as I could ever find, leave any materials behind him relating to this affair. Some time after, Mr. *Killingworth* published an answer to Dr. *Foster* on the subject of Communion, and added some remarks upon this pamphlet; when I ordered my Bookseller to get me that, and the strictures on it; upon reading of which, I found that Mr. *Killingworth* expected a formal answer to it was preparing, and would be published by a Gentleman he represents as the occasion of its being written; which for some time I have been waiting for, but hearing nothing of it, and the boasts of the party increasing, because of no answer, determined me to take it under examination in the manner I have done; but whether after all I am not too *forward*, I cannot tell; but if any thing is preparing or prepared by another hand, I hope what I have written will not hinder the publication of it.

Infant-baptism is sometimes put upon one footing, and sometimes on another; as on the covenant of grace; on circumcision; on the bap-

tism of *Jewish* proselytes; on scripture consequences; and by our author it is rested on *apostolic tradition*. This he says is *an argument of great weight*^a; and that it is *principally* for the sake of this, that his performance *appears* in the world^b; for which reason, I shall chiefly attend unto it. Whatever weight this argument may be thought to have in the present controversy, it has none in others; not in the controversy with the *Papists*, nor with the church of *England* about rites and ceremonies, this Gentleman himself being judge; who I understand is the author of *The dissenting gentleman's answer to Mr. White's three letters*. In his controversy with him, Christ is the *only* lawgiver and head of the church, and no man upon earth, or body of men, have authority to make laws, or prescribe things in religion, or to set aside, alter or new make any terms fixed by him; and apostolical authority or what is directed to by the apostles as fallible and unassisted men, is no authority at all, nor obligatory as a law on men, they having no dominion over their faith and practice; and the scriptures are the *only, common, sufficient and perfect* rule: but in the controversy about infant-baptism, apostolic tradition is of great weight; if the dispute is about sponsors and the cross in baptism, then fathers and councils stand for nothing; and the testimonies of the antients for these things, tho' *clear and indubitable*, and about the sense of which there is no contest, and are of as *early* antiquity as any thing can be produced for infant-baptism, are not allowed sufficient; but if it is about infant-baptism itself, then fathers and councils are called in, and their testimonies produced, in-

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^a Reasonable service, p. 30.

^b Preface, p. 5.

sisted upon, and retained, tho' they have not one syllable of baptism in them; and have senses affixed to them, strained and forced, contrived to serve an hypothesis, and what the good old fathers never dreamed of; is this fair dealing? can this be said to be *sincerity, integrity and honesty*? no surely. This Gentleman should know that we who are called *Anabaptists* are *Protestants*, and the Bible is our religion; and that we reject all pretended apostolic tradition, and every thing that goes under that name, not found in the Bible, as the rule of our faith and practice.

The title of the pamphlet before me is, *The baptism of infants a reasonable service, founded upon scripture, and undoubted apostolic tradition*; but if it is founded upon scripture, then not upon tradition; and if upon tradition, then not on scripture; if it is a scriptural business, then not a traditional one; and if a traditional one, then not a scriptural one; if it can be proved by scripture, that's enough, it has then no need of tradition; but if it can't be proved by that, a cart-load of traditions will not support it: this puts me in mind of what I have heard, of a countryman offering to give the judge a *dozen* reasons why his neighbour could not appear in court; in the *first* place, my lord, says he, *he is dead*; that's enough quoth the judge, I shall spare you the trouble of giving me the rest: so prove but infant-baptism by scripture, and there will be no need of the weighty argument from tradition. However, by putting the case as it is, we learn that this author by *apostolic tradition*, means *unwritten* apostolic tradition, since he distinguishes it from the scripture; and not apostolic tradition delivered in the scriptures, which

is the sense in which sometimes *tradition* is used both in the word of God^e, and in ancient writers^d. So we are not at a loss about the sense of it; it is *unwritten*, uninspired apostolic tradition; tradition not *in*, but *out* of the scriptures; not delivered by the apostles in the sacred writings, but by word of mouth to their successors, or to the churches.

It is pretty much that infant-baptism should be called an *undoubted* apostolic tradition, since it has been *doubted* of by some learned *Pædobaptists* themselves; nay, some have affirmed that it is not observed by them as an apostolic tradition, particularly *Curcellæus*^e, and who gives a very good reason for it: his words are these; “*pædobaptism* was unknown in the *two* first ages after Christ; in the *third* and *fourth* it was approved by a few; at length, in the *fifth* and following ages it began to obtain in divers places; and therefore this rite is indeed observed by us as an *ancient custom*, but not as “*an apostolic tradition*.” Bishop *Taylor*^f calls it a *pretended* apostolical tradition; and says, that the tradition cannot be proved to be apostolical, we have very good evidence from antiquity. Since then the *Pædobaptists* disagree about this point among themselves, as well as it is called in question and contested by others; one would think, this writer should not be so confident as to call it an *undoubted apostolic tradition*.

Besides, apostolic tradition at most and best, is a very precarious and uncertain thing, and not
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^e 1 Cor. xv. 3. 2 Thess. ii. 15.

^d Irenæus adv.

Hæres. l. 3. c. 4. Cyprian. Ep. 63. ad Cæcilium, p. 146.

Athanas. ad Adelph. p. 333.

^e Institut. Rel. Christ.

I. i. c. 12. §. 4. p. 25.

^f Of the liberty of pro-

phesying, p. 320, 321. Ed. 3d.

to be depended on ; we have a famous instance of this, in the controversy that arose in the *second* century, about the time of keeping *Easter* ; whether it should be observed on the 14th day of the first moon, let it fall on what day of the week it would, or on the Sunday following ; the former was observed by the churches of *Asia*, and the latter by the church of *Rome* ; both pleaded the custom and usage of their predecessors, and even ancient apostolic tradition^e ; the *Asiatic* churches said they had it by tradition from *Philip* and *John* ; the *Roman* church from *Peter* and *Paul* ; but not being able to settle this point, which was in the right, *Victor*, the then bishop of *Rome*, excommunicated the other churches that would not fall in with the practice of him, and his church ; this was in the year 196 ; and even before this, in the year 157, this same controversy was on foot ; and *Polycarp* bishop of *Smyrna*, who had been a hearer and disciple of the apostle *John*, made a journey to *Rome*, and conversed with *Anicetus* bishop of that place, about this matter ; they talked it over candidly, parted friendly, but without convincing each other, both retaining their former customs and tradition^h ; if now it was so difficult a thing to fix a tradition, or settle what was an apostolic tradition, about the middle of the *second* century, fifty or sixty years after the death of the apostle *John*, and when some of the immediate successors of the apostles were living ; what judgment can we form of apostolic traditions in the *eighteenth* century ?

Moreover,

^e Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 23, 24, 25. Socrat. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 22. p. 285. ^h Euseb. Ib. l. 4. c. 14. See Bower's lives of popes, Vol. I. p. 27, 37.

Moreover, it is *doubtful* whether there ever was any such thing as apostolic tradition ; or that ever any thing was delivered by the apostles to their successors, or to the churches, to be observed by them, which are not delivered in the sacred writings ; and I defy this Gentleman, and demand of him to give me one single instance of any apostolic tradition of this nature ; and if no such instance can be given, it is in vain to talk of *undoubted apostolic tradition* ; and upon what a miserable foundation must infant-baptism stand, that rests upon this ? unwritten apostolic tradition is a *non entity*, as the learned *Alting*¹ calls it ; it is a mere chimæra ; a refuge of hereticks formerly, and of papists now ; a favourite argument of theirs to prove by it what they please.

But be it so, that there is such a thing as *apostolic tradition* ; let it be proved that infant-baptism is such ; let the apostles be pointed out that delivered it. Were they all the apostles or only some of them that delivered it ? let them be named who they were, and to whom they delivered it, and when, and where. The apostles *Peter* and *Paul* who were, the one the apostle of the circumcision, and the other the apostle of the uncircumcision, one would think, should be the most likely to hand down this tradition ; the one to the christian *Jews*, and the other to the christian *Gentiles* ; or however, to their successors or companions : but is there any proof or evidence that they did so ? none at all ; tho' there are writings of persons extant that lived in their times. If *Clemens Romanus* was a successor of *Peter*, as the *Papists* say, it might have been expected, that it would have been delivered to him,

¹ Loc. Commun. p. 287.

him, and he would have published it; but there is not a word of it in his epistles still in being. *Barnabas* was a companion of the apostle *Paul*; and had it been a tradition of his, it might be justly thought, it would be met with in an epistle of his now extant; but there is not the least hint of it in it, but on the contrary, several passages in favour of believers baptism. Perhaps, as *John* was the last of the apostles, and out-lived them all, it was left with him to transmit it to others; and had this been the case, it might have been hoped it would have been found in the writings of *Polycarp*, a hearer and disciple of the apostle *John*; but not a syllable of it is to be found in him. Nay *Papias* bishop of *Hierapolis*, one that was a hearer of *John* the elder of *Ephesus*, and a companion of *Polycarp*, and who had conversed with those who were familiar with the apostles, and made it his business to pick up sayings and facts, said or done by the apostles, not recorded in scripture, has not a word of this; which childish business would have been a very pretty thing for that weak-headed man, as *Eusebius*^k represents him, to have gone prattling about with; here's an apostolic tradition then, which no body knows by whom it was delivered, nor to whom, nor when and where: the companions and successors of the apostles say nothing of it. The *Jews*^l talk of a *mosaic* tradition and oral law, delivered from one to another for several thousand years running; they tell you by whom it was first given and received; and can name the persons to whom it was transmitted in succeeding ages; this

^k Euseb. ib. 1. 3. c. 39.

^l Pirke abot, c. 1. §. 1.

this is something to purpose ; this is doing business roundly ; but here's a tradition no body can tell from whence it comes, and who received it, and handed it down ; for there is not the least mention of it, nor any pretended to in the *first* century or apostolic age. But let us attend to what evidence is given of it, in the next or *second* century.

Two passages are produced out of the writers of this age, to prove this *undoubted apostolic tradition* ; the one out of *Justin Martyr* ; the other out of *Irenæus*. That from *Justin* is as follows ^m ; “ several persons among us, men and women, of “ sixty and seventy years of age, οἱ ἐκ παιδῶν “ ἐμαθὴν ἐν τοῦ Χριστοῦ, *who from their childhood* “ *were instructed in Christ*, remain incorrupt :” for so the phrase on which the whole depends should be rendred, and not *discipled* or *proselyted to Christ* ; which rendring of the words as it is unjustifiable, so it would never have been thought of, had it not been to serve a turn ; and is not agreeable to *Justin's* use of the word, who frequently makes use of it in the sense of instruction and teaching, as when he speaks of persons being μαθὴν ἐν τοῦ θεοῦ, *instructed* into divine doctrines ⁿ ; and of others being μαθὴν ἐν οὐνοῦ, *instructed* in the name (person or doctrine) of Christ, and leaving the way of error ^o ; and of Christ's sending his disciples to the *Gentiles*, who by them ἐμαθὴν ἐν τοῦ, *instructed* them ^p : nor should ἐκ παιδῶν, be rendred *in infancy*, but *from childhood* ; and is a phrase of the same signification with that in 2 *Tim.* iii. 15, where *Timothy* is said ἀπο βρεφὸς, *from a child* - to know the holy scriptures ; and

Justin's

^m Apolog. 2. p. 62.

^c Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 258.

ⁿ Apolog. 1. p. 43.

^p lb. p. 272.

Justin's sense is, that notwithstanding the strict and severe commands of Christ in *Matt.* v. 28, 29, 30, 44. as they might seem to be, and which he cites; yet there were several persons of the age he mentions, then living, who had been instructed in the person, offices, and doctrines of Christ, or had been trained up in the christian religion from their childhood, who had persevered hitherto, and were incorrupt in their practices, and in their principles; and which is no other than a verification of what the wise man observes, *Pro.* xxii. 6. *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it:* and we are able in our day, to point out persons of an age that *Justin* mentions, who have been trained up in the christian religion from their childhood; and who in riper years have made a public profession of it, and have held fast their profession without wavering, and lived unblemished lives and conversations; and yet never were baptized in their infancy. Behold, here the first proof and evidence of infant-baptism being an *undoubted apostolic tradition*; when there is not a word of baptism in it, much less of infant-baptism; nor any hint of it, or reference unto it. Can the most sanguine *Pædobaptist* sit down, and in cool reflection conclude upon reading and considering this passage, that it proves infant-baptism to be an *undoubted apostolic tradition*? surely he cannot.

The other passage is out of *Irenæus*, and stands thus^a; “ he (Christ) came to save all; “ all I say, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, “ *who by him are born again unto God*, infants, “ and little ones, and children, and young men,

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“ and

^a Adv. Hæres. l. 3. c. 39.

“ and old men.” For so the words are to be rendred, and not *baptized unto God*; for the word *renascor* is never used by *Irenæus*, or rather by his translator in such a sense; nor had it as yet obtained among the antients to use the words *regenerated* and *regeneration* for *baptized*, and *baptism*. Likewise, it is certain that *Irenæus* speaks elsewhere of regeneration as distinct from baptism, as an inward spiritual work, agreeable to the scriptures; which never speak of it but as such, no not in *John* iii. 5. *Tit.* iii. 5. And what reason can there be to depart from the literal and scriptural sense of the word, and even the sense which *Irenæus* uses it in; and especially, since infants are capable of regeneration in such a sense of it? besides, to understand *Irenæus* as speaking of baptism, is to make him at least to suggest a doctrine which is absolutely false; as if Christ came to save all and only such, who are baptized unto God; when it is certain, he came to save the Old Testament-saints, who never were baptized, as well as New Testament-saints; and no doubt many now are saved by him, who never were baptized with water at all: and on the other hand, nothing is more true than that he came to save all and only those, who are regenerated by the spirit and grace of God, of whatsoever age they be. And after all, when it is observed that the chapter out of which this passage is taken, is thought by some learned men to be none of *Irenæus*’s, but a spurious piece; and if it is his, it is only a translation, as almost all his works be, and a very foolish, uncouth and barbarous one, as learned men observe; so that it is not certain, that these are his words, or are a true translation of them;

what wise and considerate man will say, that this is a proof of infant-baptism being an *undoubted apostolic tradition*? seeing the passage is so much contested, and so much is to be said against it; seeing at most and best, the sense of it is doubtful; and seeing it is certain that *Irenæus* uses the word *regeneration* in a different sense from baptism^r; who can be sure he uses it of baptism here? Upon the whole, what thoughtful man will affirm from hence, that infant-baptism is an *undoubted apostolic tradition*? and seeing these two testimonies are the only ones produced in favour of infant-baptism in the *second* century; and the latter Dr. *Wall*^s confesses, is *the first express mention that we have met with of infants baptized*; tho' there is no mention at all made of it in it, any more than in the former; he must have a strong faith to believe, and a good assurance upon such evidence to assert^t, “ that the
 “ baptism of infants was *the undoubted practice* of
 “ the christian church in its *purest* and *first* ages;
 “ the *ages* immediately succeeding the *apostles*.”
 Let us now proceed to the *third* century.

Tertullian is the first man that ever made mention of infant-baptism that we know of; and as he was the first that spoke of it, he at the same time spoke against it, dissuaded from it, and advised to defer it; and tho' he was quite *singular*, as our author says, in this his advice; it should be observed, that he is also quite *singular* in his mention of the thing itself; there being no writings of any cotemporary of his extant, from which we might learn their sense
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^r Ib. l. 1. c. 18. & l. 4. c. 59. & l. 5. c. 15.

^s History of infant-baptism, par. 1. ch. 3. §. 6.

^t Reasonable service, p. 30.

of this 'affair. We allow that infant-baptism was moved in the *third* century; that it then began to be talked of, and became matter of debate, and might be practised in the *African* churches, where it was first moved. We do not deny the *probability* of the practice of it then, tho' the *certainty* of it does not appear; it is *probable* it might be practised, but it is not *certain* it was; as yet it has not been proved. Now here we stick, by this we abide, that there is no mention made of it in any authentic writer before *Tertullian's* time. And this writer himself elsewhere^u observes, that "by *his* time, it is well known, a great variety of *superstitious*, and ridiculous, and foolish rites were brought into the church." The date of infant-baptism cannot, we apprehend, be carried higher than his time; and we require of any of our learned *Pædobaptist* brethren, to produce a single passage out of any authentic writer before *Tertullian*, in which infant-baptism is *expressly* mentioned, or *clearly* hinted at, or *plainly* supposed, or *manifestly* referred unto. This being the case, as we own it began in this century, and might be practised by some, it might be needless in a good measure to consider after-testimonies; however, I shall not think fit wholly to neglect them.

Origen is next quoted, and *three* passages out of him; shewing that the baptism of infants is a tradition of the apostles, and an usage of the church for the remission of sins; but it should be observed, that these quotations are not from the *Greek* of *Origen*; he wrote much in that language, and there is much still extant in it; and

^u The dissenting gentleman's *third* letter, &c. p. 32.

and yet nothing is produced from thence, that can fairly be construed in favour of infant-baptism; tho' many things may be observed from thence, in favour of adult-baptism. The *three* passages are quoted out of some *Latin* translations, greatly interpolated, and not to be depended on. His *Homilies* on *Leviticus*, and exposition of the epistle to the *Romans*, out of which *two* of them are taken, are translated by *Ruffinus*; who with the former, he himself owns, he used much freedom, and added much, and took such a liberty in both of adding, taking away, and changing, that as *Erasmus* ^w says, whoever reads these pieces, it is uncertain whether he reads *Origen* or *Ruffinus*; and *Vossius* observes ^x, that the former of these was interpolated by *Ruffinus*, and thinks therefore, that the passage cited was of the greater authority against the *Pelagians*, because *Ruffinus* was inclined to them. The *Homilies* on *Luke* out of which is the other passage, were translated by *Jerom*, of whom *Du Pin* says ^y, that his *versions* are not more exact than *Ruffinus*'s. Now both these lived at the latter end of the *fourth* century, and it looks very probable, that these very passages are additions or interpolations of these men, since the language agrees with those times, and no other; for no cotemporary of *Origen*'s, nor any writer before him, or after him, until the times of *Ruffinus*, *Jerom* and *Austin*, speak of infant-baptism as an usage of the church, or an apostolical tradition; in short, as bishop *Taylor* observes ^z, “ a tradition apostolical, if it be not consigned
“ with

^w In Rivet. critici sacri, l. 2. c. 12. p. 202. ^x Hist. Pelag. par. 1. l. 2. p. 147. ^y Hist. Eccl. Vol. I. p. 132. ^z Liberty of prophesying, p. 320.

“ with a fuller testimony than of one person
 “ (*Origen*,) whom all after-ages have condem-
 “ ned of many errors, will obtain so little
 “ reputation amongst those, who know that
 “ things have upon greater authority pretended
 “ to derive from the apostles, and yet falsely ;
 “ that it will be a great argument, that he is
 “ credulous, and weak, that shall be determi-
 “ ned by so weak a probation, in matter of so
 “ great concernment.”

Cyprian with his council of *sixty-six* bishops, are brought as witnesses of infant-baptism, a little after the middle of the *third* century. We allow that as infant-baptism was moved for in *Tertullian's* time, so it obtained in the *African* churches in *Cyprian's* time; but then by *Fidus* the country bishop, applying to the council to have a doubt resolved, whether it was lawful to baptize infants until they were eight days old; it appears to be a novel practice, and that as yet it was undetermined by council or custom, when they were to be baptized, whether as soon as born, or on the eighth day, or whether it was to be left to every one's liberty; and it should also be observed, that in this age, infant-communion was practised as well as infant-baptism; and very likely both began together, as it is but reasonable, that if the one be admitted, the other should. But of this more hereafter.

The *Clementine Constitutions* as they are called, are next produced, as enjoining infant-baptism; but why does this gentleman call them the *Clementine Constitutions*, unless he is of opinion, and which he suggests by this title of them, that *Clemens Romanus* was the compiler of them from the mouths of the apostles? and if so, he might have

have placed the passage out of them with greater advantage, at the head of his testimonies; but he must know, that these writings are condemned as spurious, by almost all learned men, excepting Mr. *Whiston*; and were not heard of till the times of *Epiphanius*, in the latter end of the *fourth* century, if so soon: and it should be observed, that these same *Constitutions*, which direct to the baptizing of infants, injoin the use of godfathers in baptism; the form of renouncing the devil and all his works; the consecration of the water; trine immersion; the use of oil, and baptizing fasting; crossing with the sign of the cross in the forehead; keeping the day of Christ's nativity, *Epiphany*, the *Quadragesima* or *Lent*; the feast of the passover, and the festivals of the apostles; fasting on the fourth and sixth days of the week; praying for saints departed; singing for the dead, and honouring their reliques; with many other things foreign enough from the simplicity of the apostolic doctrine and practice. A testimony from such a work, can be of very little credit to the cause of infant-baptism.

And now we are come to a very *remarkable* and *decisive* testimony as it is called, from the writings of *Austin* and *Pelagius*; the sum of which is, that there being a controversy between these two persons about original sin, the latter who denied it, was pressed by the former, with an argument taken from the baptism of infants for the remission of sins; with which *Pelagius* seemed exceedingly embarrassed, when it greatly concerned him to deny it if he could; and had it been an innovation, so acute, learned, and sagacious a man as he was, would have discovered

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it; but on the contrary, when he was charged with a denial of it as the consequence of his opinion, he warmly disclaims it, and complains of a slander; and adds, that he never heard that even any impious heretick denied it, or refused it to infants; and the same says *Austin*, that it never was denied by any man, catholic or heretic, and was the constant usage of the church; for all which vouchers are produced. To which may be replied.

1. However embarrassed *Pelagius* might be with the argument, it did not lead to a controversy about the subject, but the end of baptism, and about the latter, and not the former was the dispute; nor was he under so great a temptation, and much less necessity, nor did it so greatly concern him to deny the baptism of infants, on account of his tenet; since he was able upon his principles to point out other ends of their baptism, than that of remission of sin; and particularly, their receiving and enjoying the kingdom of heaven; and as a late writer^a observes, this proposition “ *baptism ought to be*
“ *administred to children, as well as to the adult;*
“ *was not inconsistent with, nor repugnant to his*
“ *doctrine; for tho’ he denied original sin, he*
“ *allowed baptism to be administred even to*
“ *children, but only for their sanctification.*”

2. It should be known and observed, that we have no writings of *Pelagius* extant, at least under his name, only some passages quoted by his adversaries, by which we can judge what were his sentiments about infant-baptism; and it is well known that a man’s words often are misquoted, or misunderstood, or misrepresented by an adversary; I will not say that this is the case

^a *Bower’s History of Popes, Vol. I. p. 339.*

case of *Pelagius*; I would hope better things of his adversaries, particularly *Austin*, and that he has been used fairly; I am willing to allow his authorities, tho' it would have been a greater satisfaction to have had these things from himself, and not at second hand. Nor

3. Would I detract from the character of *Pelagius*, or call in question his acuteness, sagacity, and learning; yet two doctors of the age in which he lived, are divided about him in this respect, *Austin* and *Jerom*; the former speaks of him as a very considerable man, and of great penetration; but the latter, as if he had no genius, and but very little knowledge^b; it must be owned, that *Austin* was the most candid man, and *Jerom* a sour one, who seldom spoke well of those he opposed, tho' he was a man of the greatest learning, and so the best judge of it: but however acute, learned, and sagacious *Pelagius* was, yet falling in with the stream of the times, and not seeing himself concerned about the subjects, but the end of baptism, might give himself no trouble to enquire into the rise of it; but take it for granted as *Austin* did, who perhaps was as acute, learned, and sagacious as he, that it had been the constant usage of the church, and an apostolic tradition; as he had many other things in which he was mistaken, as will soon appear.

4. Tho' *Pelagius* complained that he was defamed, and slandered by some who charged him with denying infant-baptism; yet this, *Austin* observes, was only a shift of his, in order to invert the state of the question, that he might more easily answer to what was objected to him, and preserve his own opinion. And certain it is, ac-

D 2

cording

^b Bower ibid. p. 329, 339.

according to *Austin*^c, that the *Pelagians* did deny baptism to some infants, even to the infants of believers, and that for this reason, because they were holy; what others made a reason for it, they make a reason against it.

5. *Pelagius* says no such thing, that he never heard, no not even any impious heretick who denied baptism to infants. His words indeed are^d, *nunquam se vel impium aliquem hæreticum audisse, qui hoc, quod proposuit, de parvulis diceret*; that he never heard, no not any impious heretic, that would say concerning infants, what he had proposed or mentioned: the sense depends upon the meaning of the phrase, *quod proposuit*, what he had proposed or mentioned, of whom, and what that is to be understood; whether of *Austin*, and the state of the case as proposed, and set down by him; so our author seems to understand it, since by way of explanation, he adds, *viz. that unbaptized infants are not liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that they are not to be cleansed by the regeneration of baptism*: but this gentleman has not put it as *Austin* has stated it, which is thus; “ it is objected to them (the “ *Pelagians*) that they will not own that un- “ baptized infants are liable to the condemna- “ tion of the first man, & *in eos transisse origi- “ nale peccatum regeneratione purgandum*, and that “ original sin has passed upon them to be cleansed “ by regeneration;” and according to this sense the meaning cannot be, that he never heard that any heretick denied baptism to infants; but either that he never heard that any one should say, that unbaptised infants are not liable to the con-

^c De peccator. merit. & remiss. l. 2. c. 25.
Aug. de peccato originali, l. 2. c. 18.

^d In

condemnation of the first man, and that original sin had not passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration; but then this is to bring the wicked hereticks as witnesses against himself, and to make himself worse than they: or the meaning is, that he never heard that any of them should say, that unbaptised infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin has passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration, which is most likely; but then this makes rather against, than for the thing for which it is brought; since it makes the heretick as never saying that infants stood in need of being cleansed by baptism: or else, *quod proposuit, what he had proposed or mentioned*, refers to *Pelagius*, and to the state of the question as he had put it; representing that he was charged with promising the kingdom of heaven to some, without the redemption of Christ; and of this he might say, he never heard the most impious heretick so say; and this seems to be the sense by what he subjoins; “ for
 “ who is so ignorant of what is read in the
 “ Gospel, not only as to attempt to affirm it,
 “ but even lightly mention it, or even imagine
 “ it? Moreover, who so impious that would
 “ exclude infants from the kingdom of heaven,
 “ *dum eos baptizari & in Christo renasci putat?*
 “ whilst he thinks, or is of opinion that they
 “ are baptized and regenerated in Christ?” for so it is in my edition of *Austin*; *putat*, and not *vetat*, as Dr. *Wall* quotes it; and after him this gentleman: and *Pelagius* further adds, “ who
 “ so impious as to forbid to an infant of what-
 “ soever age, the common redemption of man-
 “ kind;” but this, *Austin* says, like the rest is
 am-

ambiguous; what redemption he means, whether from bad to good, or from good to better : now take the words which way you will, they can't be made to say, that he had never heard that any heretick denied baptism to infants, but that denied the kingdom of heaven to them; and indeed every one must allow, whoever is of that opinion, that infants are by baptism really regenerated in Christ; which was the prevailing notion of those times, and the light in which it is put; that they must belong to the kingdom of heaven, and share in the common redemption by Christ.

6. *Austin* himself does not say, that he had never heard or read of any catholick, heretick, or schismatick, that denied infant-baptism; he could never say any such thing; he must know, that *Tertullian* had opposed it; and he himself was at the council of *Carthage*, and there presided, and was at the making of that canon which runs thus; "also it is our pleasure, that " whoever denies that new-born infants are to " be baptized——let him be anathema:" but to what purpose was this canon made, if he and his brethren knew of none that denied infant-baptism? To say that this respects some people, who were still of the same opinion with *Fidus* an *African* bishop, that lived 150 years before this time, that infants were not to be baptized until they were eight days old, is an idle notion of *Dr. Wall*†: can any man in his senses think, that a council, consisting of all the bishops in *Africa*, should agree to *anathematize* their own brethren, who were in the same opinion and practice of infant-baptism with themselves; only they

† Hist. of infant-baptism, par. 1. ch. 19. §. 37.

they thought it should not be administred to them as soon as born, but at eight days old? *Credat Judæus Apella*, believe it who will; he is capable of believing any thing, that can believe this. *Austin* himself makes mention of some that argued against it, after this manner²; “men are
 “used to ask this question, says he, of what
 “profit is the sacrament of christian baptism to
 “infants, seeing when they have received it,
 “for the most part they die before they know
 “any thing of it?” and as before observed, he brings in the *Pelagians* saying³, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized: and so *Jerom*⁴, who was a cotemporary of his, speaks of some christians, *qui dare noluerint baptisma*, who refused to give baptism to their children; so that tho’ infant-baptism greatly obtained in those times, yet was not so general as this author represents it. *Austin* therefore could not say what he is made to say; but what then does he say, that he never remembred to have read in any catholick, heretick, or schismatick writer? why, “that infants were not to be baptized, that they
 “might receive the remission of sins, but that
 “they might be sanctified in Christ:” it is of this the words are spoken, which our author has quoted, but are not to be found in the place he refers to; having thro’ inadvertence mistaken *Dr. Wall*, from whom I perceive he has taken this, and other things. This, and not infant-baptism itself, was what was transiently talked of at *Cartbage*, and cursorily heard by *Austin* some little time ago, when he was there: this was the novelty he was startled at, but did not think

² De libero Arbitrio, l. 3. c. 23.
 merit. l. 2. c. 25.

³ De peccator.
⁴ Ep. ad Latam, T. I. fol. 19. M.

think it seasonable to enter into a debate about it then, and so forgot it: for surely it will not be said, that it was the denial of infant-baptism that was defended with so much warmth against the church, as he says this was; and was committed to memory in writing; and the brethren were obliged to ask their advice about it; and they were obliged to dispute and write against; for this would prove the very reverse of what this gentleman produces it for. Now, tho' *Austin* could not say that he never remembred to have heard or read of any catholick, schismatick, or heretick, that denied infant-baptism; yet he might say he never remembred to have heard or read of any that owned and practised infant-baptism, but who allowed it to be for the remission of sin; which is widely different from the former: it is one thing what *Austin* says, and another, what may be thought to be the consequence of his so saying; and in the same sense are we to understand him, when he says ^k, “and this “the church has *always* had, has *always* held.” What? why, that infants are diseased thro' *Adam*; and stand in need of a physician; and are brought to the church to be healed. It was the doctrine of original sin, and the baptism of infants for the remission of it, he speaks of in these passages; it is true indeed, he took infant-baptism to be an antient and constant usage of the church, and an apostolic tradition ^l; which perhaps he had taken up from the *Latin* translations of *Origen* by *Jerom* and *Ruffinus* before-mentioned; since no other ecclesiastical writer speaks of it as such, before those times: but in this he was deceived and

^k De verbis Apostoli, ferm. 10. c. 2.
^l De baptismo, Contr. Donat. l. 4. c. 23, 24.

^l De Genesi,

and mistaken, as he was in other things which he took for apostolic traditions ; which ought to be equally received as this, by those who are influenced by his authority ; and indeed every *honest* man that receives infant-baptism upon the foot of tradition, ought to receive every thing else upon the same foot, of which there is equally as *full*, and as *early* evidence of *apostolic tradition*, as of this : let it then be observed.

1. That the same *Austin* that asserts infant-baptism to be an apostolic tradition, affirms infant-communion to be so likewise, as Bishop *Taylor*^m observes ; and thus *Austin* saysⁿ, “ if they
“ pay any regard to the *apostolic authority*, or
“ rather to the Lord and Master of the apostles,
“ who says, that they have no life in themselves,
“ unless they eat the flesh of the son of man,
“ and drink his blood, which they can’t do un-
“ less baptized ; will sometimes own that un-
“ baptized infants have not life”—and a little
after, “ no man that remembers that he is a
“ christian, and of the catholic faith, denies or
“ doubts that infants not having the grace of
“ regeneration in Christ, and without eating his
“ flesh, and drinking his blood, have no life in
“ them ; but are hereby liable to everlasting
“ punishment ;” by which he means the two
sacraments of baptism, and the Lord’s supper ;
the necessity of both which to eternal life he
founded upon a mistaken sense of *John* iii. 5.
and vi. 53. as appears from what he elsewhere
says^o ; where having mentioned the first of those
passages,

^m Liberty of prophesying, p. 119.
Bonifacio, Contr. Pelag.
remiss. l. 1. c. 20.

ⁿ Ep. 106.
^o De peccator. merit. &

passages, he cites the latter, and adds; " let us
 " hear the Lord I say, not indeed speaking this
 " of the sacrament of the holy laver, but of the
 " sacrament of the holy table; whither none
 " rightly come unless baptized. *Except ye eat*
 " *my flesh, and drink my blood, ye shall have no*
 " *life in you*; what do we seek for further? what
 " can be said in answer to this, unless one would
 " set himself obstinately against clear and in-
 " vincible truth? will any one dare to say this,
 " that this passage does not belong to infants;
 " and that they can have life in themselves,
 " without partaking of his body and blood:"
 and of the necessity of this, as well as of bap-
 tism to eternal life, he says^p the *African* christians
 took to be an antient and apostolic tradition.
Innocent the first, his cotemporary, was also of
 the same mind; and the giving of the Eucharist
 to infants generally obtained; and it continued
 six hundred years after, until transubstantiation
 took place; and is continued to this day in the
Greek church: and if we look back to the times
 before *Austin*, we shall find that it was not only
 the opinion of *Cyprian*, but was practised in his
 time; he tells^q a story which he himself was a
 witness of; how that a little child being left in
 a fright by its parents with a nurse, she carried
 the child to the magistrates, who had it to an
 idol's sacrifice; where because the child could
 not eat flesh, they gave it bread soaked in wine:
 some time after, the mother had her child again,
 which not being able to relate to her what had
 passed, it was brought by its parent to the place
 where *Cyprian* and the church were celebrating
 the Lord's supper; and where it shrieked, and
 was

^p Ibid. c. 24.

^q *Cyprian de lapsis*. p. 244.

was dreadfully distressed ; and when the cup was offered it in its turn by the deacon, it shut its lips against it ; who forced the wine down its throat ; upon which it sobbed, and threw it up again. Now here is a plain instance of infant-communion in the *third* century ; and we defy any one to give a more early instance, or an instance so early, of infant-baptism : it is highly probable that infant-baptism was now practised ; and that this very child was baptized, or otherwise it would not have been admitted to the Lord's supper ; and it is reasonable to suppose, they both began together ; yet no instance can be given of infant-baptism, so early as of infant-communion ; wherefore whoever thinks himself obliged to receive the one upon such evidence and authority, ought to receive the other ; the one has as good a claim to apostolic authority and tradition, as the other has.

2. The sign of the cross in baptism was used by the antients, and pleaded for as an apostolic tradition. *Basil*, who lived in the *fourth* century observes *, that some things they had from scripture ; and others from apostolic tradition, of which he gives instances ; and says he, “ be-
 “ cause this is the first and most common, I
 “ will mention it in the first place ; as that we
 “ *sign with the sign of the cross* those who place
 “ their hope in Christ ; and then asks who taught
 “ this in scripture ?” *Chrysostom*, who lived in the same age, manifestly refers to it, when he says †, “ how can you think it fitting for the
 “ minister to make *the sign on its* (the child's)-
 “ *forehead*, where you have besmeared it with
 E 2 “ the

* Basil. de Spiritu Sanct. c. 27.
 † Ep. ad Corinth.

• Homil. 12. in

“ the dirt ? ” which *Cyril* † calls the *royal seal* upon the forehead. *Cyprian* in the middle of the *third* century relates the custom of his times †; “ what is now also in use among us is, that “ those who are baptized, are offered to the “ governors of the church ; and thro’ our “ prayers and imposition of hands, they obtain “ the Holy Spirit, and are made compleat *signaculo Dominico*, with the seal of the Lord : ” and in another place † he says, “ they only can “ escape, who are regenerated and *signed* with “ the *sign of Christ*.” And *Tertullian*, in the beginning of the same century, speaking of baptism says †, “ the flesh is washed, that the soul “ may be unspotted ; the flesh is anointed, that “ the soul may be consecrated ; *caro signatur*, “ *the flesh is signed*, that the soul also may be “ fortified.” Now this use of the cross in baptism, was as early as any instance of infant-baptism that can be produced ; higher than *Tertullian*’s time it cannot be carried ; what *partiality* then is it, I know to whom I speak, to admit the one upon the foot of tradition, and reject the other ? The same *Tertullian* † also speaks of *sponsores*, *sponsors*, or godfathers in baptism ; which this writer himself has mentioned, and thus renders ; “ what occasion is there—except “ in cases of necessity, that the sponsors or god- “ *fathers* be brought into danger ; ” not to take notice of the *Clementine Constitutions* as our author calls them, which enjoin the use of them ; and which appear to be as early as infant-baptism itself ; and indeed it is but reasonable that if infants

† Cateches. 12. §. 4.

‡ Ep. 73. ad Jubajanum.

p. 184.

¶ Ad Demetrian. prope finem.

× De

Resurrectione Carnis, c. 8.

γ De Baptismo. c. 18.

infants are baptized, there should be sponsors or sureties for them.

3. The form of renouncing the devil and all his works, used in baptism, is also by *Basil*² represented as an apostolic tradition; for having mentioned several rites in baptism, received upon the same foot, he adds; “ and the rest of what “ is done in baptism, as to renounce the devil “ and his angels, from what scripture have we “ it? is it not from this private and secret tradition?” *Origen* before the middle of the *third* century relates the usage of his times^a; “ let every one of the faithful remember when “ he first came to the waters of baptism; when “ he received the first seals of faith, and came “ to the fountain of salvation; what words there “ he then used; and what he denounced to the “ devil, *non se usurum pompis ejus*, that he would “ not *use his pomps*, nor his *works*, nor any of “ his service, nor obey his pleasures:” and *Tertullian*^b before him; “ when we enter into “ the water, we profess the faith of Christ, in “ the words of his law; we protest with our “ mouth that *we renounce the devil, and his pomp, “ and his angels:*” and in another place^c, in proof of unwritten tradition, and that it ought to be allowed of in some cases, he says; “ to “ begin with baptism; when we come to the “ water, we do there, and sometimes in the “ congregation under the hand of the pastor, “ protest that we *renounce* the devil, and his “ pomp, and angels; and then we are thrice “ immersed; answering some thing more than “ the Lord has enjoined in the Gospel:” now this

² Ut supra.

^a Homil. 12. in Numeros, fol. 114. D

^b De Spectaculis, c. 4.

^c De Corona, c. 3.

this is as early as any thing can be produced in favour of infant-baptism.

4. Exorcisms and exsufflations are represented by *Austin*^b, as rites in baptism, *prisca traditionis*, of antient tradition, as used by the church every where, *throughout the whole world*. He frequently presses the *Pelagians* with the argument taken from thence, and suggests, that they were pinched with it, and knew not how to answer it; he observes, that things the most impious and absurd, were the consequences of their principles, and among the rest these^c;
 “ that they (infants) are baptized in a Saviour,
 “ but not saved; redeemed by a deliverer, but
 “ not delivered; washed in the laver of rege-
 “ neration, but not washed from any thing;
 “ *exorcised* and *exsufflated*, but not freed from
 “ the power of darkness:” and elsewhere he says^d, that “ notwithstanding their craftiness,
 “ they know not what answer to make to this,
 “ *that infants are exorcised and exsufflated*; for
 “ this without doubt, is done in mere show, if
 “ the devil has no power over them; but if he
 “ has power over them, and therefore are not
 “ *exorcised and exsufflated* in mere show, by what
 “ has the prince of sinners power over them,
 “ but by sin?” And *Gregory Nazianzen* before him, as he exhorts to confession of sin in baptism, so to exorcism; “ don’t refuse, says he^e,
 “ the medicine of *exorcism*—for that is the trial
 “ of sincerity, with respect to that grace (bap-
 “ tism).” And says *Optatus of Milevis*^f, “ every
 “ man

^b De peccato originali, l. 2. c. 40. de nupt. & concup. l. 1. c. 20. & l. 2. c. 18.

^c Contr. Julian. l. 3. c. 5.

^d Ep. 105. Bonifacio, prope finem.

^e Orat. 40.

p. 657.

^f Adv. Parmenian. l. 4. p. 92.

“ man that is born, tho’ born of christian parents, cannot be without the spirit of the world, which must be excluded and separated from him, before the salutary laver ; this *exorcism* effects, by which the unclean spirit is driven away, and is caused to flee, to desert places.” *Cyprian* in the *third* century, speaking of the efficacy of baptism to destroy the power of Satan, relates what was done in his days^z ; “ that by the *exorcist* the devil was buffeted, distressed, and tortured, with an human voice, and by a divine power.” And *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome*, a cotemporary of his, makes mention^h of the same officers in the church ; and this is also as early as the practice of infant-baptism.

5. Trine immersion is affirmed to be an apostolic tradition, nothing is more frequently asserted by the antients than this. *Basil*ⁱ among his instances of apostolic tradition, mentions this ; “ now a man is thrice immersed, from whence is it derived ?” his meaning is, is it from scripture or apostolic tradition ? not the former, but the latter. And *Jerom*^k in a dialogue of his, makes one of the parties say after this manner, which clearly appears to be his own sense ; “ and many other things which by tradition are observed in the churches, have obtained the authority of a written law ; as to dip the head thrice in the laver,” &c. And so *Tertullian* in the *third* century as above, in support of tradition, mentions^l this as a common practice ; “ we are thrice immersed ;” and elsewhere^m speaking of

^z Ep. 76. ad Magnum.

Hist. l. 6. c. 43.

ⁱ Ut supra. ^k Adv. Luciferianos, fol. 47. H. Tom. 2.

^m Adv. Praxeam c. 26.

^h Apud Euseb. Eccl.

^k Adv. Luci-

^l De Corona, c. 3.

of the commission of Christ, he says, " he com-
 " manded them to dip into the Father, and the
 " Son, and the Holy Ghost ; not into one, for
 " not once but thrice are we dipped, at each
 " name, into each person ;" and he is the first
 man that makes mention of infant-baptism, who
 relates this as the then usage of the church : and
*Sozomen*ⁿ the historian observes, that it was said,
 that " *Eunomius* was the first that dared to assert,
 " that the divine-baptism should be performed
 " by one immersion ; and so corrupted the *apo-*
 " *stolic tradition*, which till now had been every
 " where observed."

6. The consecration of the water of baptism
 is an antient rite, and which *Basil*^o derives from
 apostolic tradition ; " we consecrate, says he,
 " the water of baptism, and the anointing oil,
 " as well as the person that receives baptism,
 " from what scripture ? is it not from private
 " and secret tradition ?" by which he means apo-
 stolic tradition, as he in the same place calls it ;
 which was done, not only by the prayer of the
 administrator over the water, but by signing it
 with the sign of the cross ; which rite was in use
 in the times of *Austin*^p, who says, " baptism is
 " signed with the sign of Christ, that is, the
 " water where we are dipped ;" and *Ambrose*
 who lived in the same age relates, that exorcism
 was also used in consecration, he describes the
 manner of it thus^q ; " why did Christ descend
 " first, and afterwards the spirit, seeing the
 " form and use of baptism require, that first
 " the font be consecrated, and then the person
 " that is to be baptized, goes down ? for where
 " the

ⁿ Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 26.
 tempore sermo, 119. c. 8.

^o Ut supra.

^p De

^q De sacramentis, l. 1. c. 5.

“ the priest first enters, he makes an exorcism,
 “ next an invocation on the creature of the
 “ water, and afterwards prays that the font
 “ may be sanctified, and the Eternal Trinity be
 “ present.” *Cyprian* in the middle of the *third*
 century, makes mention of this ceremony of
 consecrating the baptismal water; he says, “ the
 “ water must first be cleansed and *sanctified* by
 “ the priest, that it may by his baptizing in it,
 “ wash away the sins of the man that is bapti-
 “ zed.” And *Tertullian* before him, tho’ he
 makes no difference between the water of a pool,
 river or fountain, *Tiber* or *Jordan*, yet supposes
 there is a sanctification of it thro’ prayer; “ all
 “ waters, he says, from their antient original
 “ prerogative, (referring to *Gen. i. 2.*) obtain
 “ the sacrament of sanctification, *Deo invocato*,
 “ *God being called upon*; for immediately the
 “ spirit comes down from heaven, and rests
 “ upon the waters, sanctifying them of himself,
 “ and so being sanctified, they drink in together
 “ the sanctifying vertue.” This also is as high
 as the date of infant-baptism can be carried.

7. Anointing with oil at baptism, is a rite
 that claims apostolic tradition. *Basil* mentions
 it as an instance of it, and asks; “ the anointing
 “ oil, what passage in scripture teaches this?”
Austin speaks of it as the common custom of the
 church in his time; having quoted that passage
 in *Acts x. 38.* “ *how God anointed him (Jesus)*
 “ *with the Holy Ghost*, adds, not truly with
 “ visible oil, but with the gift of grace, which
 “ is signified by the visible ointment, *quo bap-*
 “ *tizatos*

† Ep. 70. ad Januarium. † De baptismo, c. 4.
 * Ut supra. † De trinitate, l. 15, c. 26.

titulatus ungit ecclesia, with which the church
 “*anoints those that are baptized:*” several parts
 of the body were wont to be anointed. *Ambrose*^w
 makes mention of the ointment on the head in
 baptism, and gives a reason for it. *Cyril*^x says,
 the oil was exorcised, and the forehead, ear,
 nose and breast, were anointed with it, and
 observes the mystical signification of each of
 these; the necessity of this anointing is urged by
Cyprian^y in the *third* century; “he that is
 “baptized must needs be anointed, that by re-
 “ceiving the chrysm, that is, the anointing,
 “he may be the anointed of God, and have
 “the grace of Christ.” And *Tertullian* in the
 beginning of the same century, says^z as before
 observed, “the flesh is anointed, that the soul may
 “be consecrated;” and in another^a place, “when
 “we come out of the laver, we are anointed
 “with the blessed ointment, according to the
 “antient discipline, in which they used to be
 “anointed with oil out of the horn, for the
 “priesthood;” this was the custom used in the
 times of the man that first spoke of infant-
 baptism.

8. The giving a mixture of milk and honey to
 a person just baptized, is a rite that was used in the
 churches antiently thro’ tradition; *Jerom*^b makes
 mention of it, as observed upon this footing, and
 as an instance among other things, which obtain-
 ed authority in that way: “as to dip the head
 “thrice in the laver, and when they came out
 “from thence, *to taste of a mixture of milk and*
 “*honey,*

^w De sacramentis, l. 3. c. 1.

^x Cateches. mysta-

^y Ep. 70, ad Januarium,

^z De resurrectione carnis, c. 8.

^a De baptismo, c. 7.

^b Adv. Luciferianos, fol. 47.

“ *honey*, to signify the new birth;” and elsewhere he says, it was a custom observed in the western churches to that day, to give *wine and milk* to them that were regenerated in Christ. This was in use in *Tertullian’s* time; for speaking of the administration of baptism, he says^d, “ we come “ to the water—then we are thrice dipped— “ then being taken out from thence, we taste a “ mixture of *milk and honey* ;” and this, as well as anointing with oil, he observes, was used by hereticks themselves, for so he says of *Marcion*; “ he does not reject the water of the creator, “ with which he washes his disciples; nor the “ oil with which he anoints his own; *nor the* “ mixture of *milk and honey*, by which he points “ them out as new born babes;” yea, even *Barnabas* a companion of the apostle *Paul*, is thought to refer to this practice, in an epistle of his still extant^f; not to take notice of the white garment, and the use of the ring and kiss in baptism, in *Cyprian* and *Tertullian’s* time^g.

Now these several rites and usages in baptism, claim their rise from *apostolic tradition*, and have equal *evidence* of it as infant-baptism has; they are of as *early* date, have the same *vouchers*, and more; the testimonies of them are *clear* and *full*; they *universally* obtained, and were practised by the churches throughout the whole world; and even by hereticks and schismatics; and this is to be said of them, that they never were *opposed* by any within the time referred to, which cannot be said of infant-baptism; for the very first man

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that

^c Comment. in Esaiam. c. 55. l. fol. 94. E.

corona, c. 3.

^d Adv. Marcion, l. 3. c. 14.

5. prope finem.

^e Tertullian de pudicitia, c. 9.

Cyprian. Ep. 59. ad Fidum, vid. Aug. contr. 2, Epist. Pelag.

l. 4, c. 8.

^f Dg

C.

that mentions it, dissuades from it ; and are these facts which could not but be *publickly* and *perfectly* known, and for which the *antient writers* and *fathers* may be appealed to, not as *reasoners* and *interpreters*, but as *historians* and *witnesses* to public *standing facts* ; and all the reasoning this gentleman makes use of, concerning the apostles forming the churches on one uniform *plan* of baptism, the *nearness* of infant-baptism to their times, from the testimony of the antients, the *difficulty* of an innovation, and the *easiness* of its detection, may be applied to all and each of these rites. Wherefore whoever receives infant-baptism upon the foot of *apostolic tradition*, and upon such *proof* and *evidence* as is given of it, as above, if he is an *honest* man ; I say again, if he is an *honest* man, he ought to give into the practice of all these rites and usages. We don't think ourselves indeed obliged to regard these things ; we know that a variety of *superstitious*, *ridiculous*, and *foolish* rites, were brought into the church in these times ; we are not of opinion, as is suggested, that even the authority of the apostles a *hundred years* after their death, was sufficient to keep an innovation from entering the church, nor even whilst they were living ; we are well assured, there never was such a sett of impure wretches under the christian name, so unsound in principle, and so bad in practice, as were in the apostles days, and in the ages succeeding, called the purest ages of christianity. We take the bible to be the only authentic, perfect, and sufficient rule of faith and practice : we allow of no other head and lawgiver but one, that is Christ ; we deny that any men, or sett of men, have any power to make laws in his house, or to decree rites and

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ceremonies,

ceremonies, to be observed by his people, no not apostles themselves uninspired : and this gentleman *out of this controversy*, is of the same mind with us, who asserts the above things we do ; and affirms without the least hesitation, that what is “ ordained by the apostles, without
 “ any precept from the Lord, or any particular
 “ direction of the Holy Spirit, is not at all ob-
 “ ligatory as *a law* upon the consciences of
 “ christians ; — even *the apostles* had no *dominion*
 “ over the *faith* and *practice* of christians, but
 “ what was given them by the special presence, and
 “ spirit of Christ, the only lawgiver, Lord, and
 “ sovereign of the church : they were to teach *only*
 “ the things which he should command them ;
 “ and whatever they *enjoined* under the influence
 “ of that spirit, was to be considered and obeyed
 “ as the injunctions of Christ ; but if they enjoined
 “ any thing in the church, without the peculiar
 “ influence and direction of this spirit, *i. e.* as
 “ merely *fallible* and *unassisted men*, in that case,
 “ their injunctions had no authority over consci-
 “ ence ; and every man’s own reason had autho-
 “ rity to examine and discuss their injunctions, as
 “ they approved themselves to his private judg-
 “ ment, to observe them or not : should we grant
 “ thee what you ask—says he to his antagonist—
 “ that the church in the present age, has the same
 “ authority and power, as the church in the apo-
 “ stolic age, considered, as not being under any
 “ immediate and extraordinary guidance of the
 “ Holy Ghost—what will you gain by it ? this
 “ same authority and power is you see, Sir, really
 “ *no power nor authority at all*.” The controversy
 between us and our brethren on this head, is the
 same

” The dissenting gentleman’s second letter, &c. p. 29, 30.

same as between *papists* and *protestants* about tradition, and between the church of *England* and *dissenters*, about the church's power to decree rites and ceremonies; *viz.* whether Christ is the sole head and lawgiver in his church; or whether any sett of men have a power to set aside, alter, and change any laws of his, or prescribe new ones; if the latter, then we own 'tis all over with us, and we ought to submit, and not carry on the dispute any further: but since we both profess to make the bible our religion, and that only the rule of our faith and practice; let us unite upon this common principle, and reject every tradition of men; and all rites and ceremonies which Christ hath not enjoined us; let us join in pulling down this prop of *popery*, and remove this scandal of the *protestant* churches, I mean infant-baptism; for sure I am, so long as it is attempted to support it upon the foot of apostolic tradition, no man can write with success against the *papists*, or such, who hold that the church has a power to decree rites and ceremonies.

However, if infant-baptism is a tradition of the apostles, then this point must be gained, that it is not a scriptural business; for if it is of tradition, then not of scripture; whoever appeals to tradition, when a doctrine or practice can be proved by scripture? appealing to tradition, and putting it upon that foot, is giving it up as a point of scripture: I might therefore be excused from considering, what this writer has advanced from scripture, in favour of infant-baptism, and the rather, since there is nothing produced but what has been brought into the controversy again and again, and has been answered

swered over and over; but perhaps this gentleman and his friends will be displeased, if I take no notice of his arguments from thence; I shall therefore just make some few remarks on them. But before I proceed, I must congratulate my readers upon the *blessed times* we are fallen into! what an enlightened age! what an age of good sense do we live in! what prodigious improvement in knowledge is made! behold! *tradition* proved by *scripture*! *apostolic tradition* proved by *Abraham's covenant*! *undoubted apostolic tradition* proved from writings in being *hundreds* of years *before* any of the *apostles* were born! all extraordinary and of the marvellous kind! but let us attend to the proof of these things.

The *first* argument is taken from its being an *incontestable fact*, that *the infants of believers* are received with their parents into covenant with God, in the former dispensations or ages of the church; which is a great privilege, a privilege still subsisting, and never revoked; wherefore the infants of believers, having still a right to the same privilege, in consequence have a right to baptism, which is now the only appointed token of God's covenant, and the only rite of admission into it¹: to which I reply, that it is not an *incontestable fact*, but a *fact contested*, that the *infants of believers* were with their parents taken into covenant with God, in the former dispensations and ages of the church; by which must be meant, the ages preceding the *Abrahamic* covenant; since that is made, to furnish out a *second* and distinct argument from this; and so the scriptures produced are quite impertinent, *Gen. xvii. 7, 10, 11, 12. Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12. Ezek.*

¹ Baptism of infants a reasonable service, &c. p. 14, 15.

Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. seeing they refer to the *Abrahamic* and *Mosaic* dispensations, of which hereafter. The first covenant made with man, was the covenant of works with *Adam* before the fall, which indeed included all his posterity, but had no *peculiar* regard to the infants of believers; he standing as a federal head to all his seed, which no man since has ever done: and in him they all sinned, were condemned, and dyed. This covenant, I presume, this gentleman can have no view unto: after the fall of *Adam*, the covenant of grace was revealed, and the way of life and salvation by the Messiah; but then this revelation was only made to *Adam* and *Eve* personally, as interested in these things, and not to their natural seed and posterity as such, as being interested in the same covenant of grace with them; for then all mankind must be taken into the covenant of grace; and if that gives a right to baptism, they have all an equal right unto it; and so there is nothing *peculiar* to the infants of believers, and of whom, there is not the least syllable mentioned throughout the whole age or dispensation of the church, reaching from *Adam* to *Noah*; a length of time, almost equal to what has run out from the birth of Christ, to the present age. The next covenant we read of, is the covenant made with *Noah* after the flood, which was not made with him, and his immediate offspring *only*; nor were they taken into covenant with him as the *infants of a believer*; nor had they any *sacrament* or *rite* given them, as a token of *Jehovah* being *their God*, and they *his children*, and as standing in a *peculiar relation* to him; will any one dare to say this of *Ham*, one of the immediate sons of *Noah*? The covenant

nant was made with *Noah* and all mankind, to the end of the world, and even with every living creature, and all the beasts of the earth, promising them security from an universal deluge, as long as the world stands ; and had nothing in it *peculiar* to the infants of believers ; and these are all the covenants the scripture makes mention of, till that made with *Abraham* of which in the next argument. This being the case, there is no room nor reason to talk of the greatness of this privilege, and of the continuance of it, and of asking when it was repealed, since it does not appear to have been a fact ; nor during these ages and dispensations of the church, was there ever any *sacrament, rite, or ceremony*, appointed for the admission of persons adult, or infants into covenant with God ; nor was there ever any such rite in *any age* of the world, nor is there *now* : the covenant with *Adam*, either of works or grace, had no ceremony of this kind ; there was a token, and still is of *Noah's* covenant, the rainbow, but not a token or rite of admission of persons into it, but a token of the continuance and perpetuity of it in all generations ; nor was circumcision a rite of admission of *Abraham's* seed into his covenant, as will quickly appear ; nor is baptism now an *initiator* rite, by which persons are admitted into the covenant. Let this gentleman if he can, point out to us where it is so described ; persons ought to appear to be in the covenant of grace, and partakers of the blessings of it, the spirit of God, faith in Christ, and repentance towards God, before they are admitted to baptism. This gentleman will find more work to support his *first* argument, than perhaps he was aware of ; the

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premises

premises being bad, the conclusion must be wrong. I proceed to

The *second* argument, taken from the *Abrahamic* covenant, which stands thus—The covenant God made with *Abraham* and his seed, *Gen.* xvii. into which *his infants* were taken together with himself, *by the rite of circumcision*, is the *very same* we are now under, the same with that in *Gal.* iii. 16, 17. still in force, and not to be disannulled, in which we believing *Gentiles* are included, *Rom.* iv. 9,—16, 17. and so being *Abraham's seed*, have a right to *all the grants and privileges* of it, and so to the admission of our infants to it, by the sign and token of it, which is changed from circumcision to baptism^k. But—1. tho' *Abraham's* seed were taken into covenant with him, which designs his adult posterity in all generations, on whom it was enjoined to circumcise their infants, it does not follow that his infants were; but so it is, that wherever the words *seed, children, &c.* are used, it immediately runs in the heads of some men, that infants must be meant, tho' they are not necessarily included; but be it so, that *Abraham's* infants were admitted with him, (tho' at the time of making this covenant, he had no infant with him, *Ishmael* was then *thirteen* years of age) yet not as *the infants of a believer*; there were believers and their infants then living, who were left out of the covenant; and those that were taken in in successive generations, were not the infants of believers only, but of unbelievers also; even all the natural seed of the *Jews*, whether believers or unbelievers.—2. Those that were admitted into this covenant, were not admitted
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^k Ibid. p. 16,—19.

by the rite of circumcision; *Abraham's* female seed were taken into covenant with him, as well as his male seed, but not by any *visible rite* or ceremony; nor were his male seed admitted by any such rite, no not by circumcision; for they were not to be circumcised until the eighth day; to have circumcised them sooner would have been criminal; and that they were in covenant from their birth, this gentleman, I presume, will not deny.—3. The covenant of circumcision as it is called, *Acts* vii. 8. cannot be the same covenant we are now under, since that is abolished, *Gal.* v. 1, 2, 3. and it is a *new* covenant, or a new administration of the covenant of grace, that we are now under; the old covenant under the *Mosaic* dispensation is waxen old, and vanished away, *Heb.* viii. 8, 13. nor is the covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen.* xvii. the same with that mentioned in *Gal.* iii. 17. which is still in force, and not to be disannulled; the distance of time between them does not agree, but falls short of the apostles date, four and twenty years; for from the making of this covenant to the birth of *Isaac*, was one year, *Gen.* xvii. 1. and xxi. 5. from thence to the birth of *Jacob*, sixty years, *Gen.* xxv. 26. from thence to his going down to *Egypt*, one hundred and thirty years, *Gen.* xlvii. 9. where the *Israelites* continued two hundred and fifteen¹; and quickly after they came out of *Egypt*, was the law given, which was but four hundred and six years after this covenant. The reason this gentleman gives, why they must be the same, will not hold good, *viz.* “this is the
“ only covenant in which God ever *made* and
“ *confirmed* promises to *Abraham*, and to his
G 2 “ seed;

¹ See Pool's annotation on *Gal.* iii. 17.

“ seed ;” since God made a covenant with *Abraham* before this, and confirmed it to his seed, and that by various rites, and usages, and wonderful appearances, *Gen.* xv. 8,—18. which covenant, and the confirmation of it, the apostle manifestly refers to in *Gal.* iii. 17. and with which his date exactly agrees, as the years are computed by *Paræus*^m thus ; from the confirmation of the covenant, and taking *Hagar* to wife, to the birth of *Isaac*, fifteen years ; from thence to the birth of *Jacob*, sixty, *Gen.* xxv. 26. from thence to his going down to *Egypt*, one hundred and thirty, *Gen.* xlvii. 9. from thence to his death, seventeen, *Gen.* xlvii. 28. from thence to the death of *Joseph*, fifty three, *Gen.* l. 26. from thence to the birth of *Moses*, seventy five ; from thence to the going out of *Israel* from *Egypt*, and the giving of the law, eighty years ; in all four hundred and thirty years. — 4. It is allowed, that the covenant made with *Abraham*, *Gen.* xvii. is of a mixed kind, consisting partly of temporal, and partly of spiritual blessings ; and that there is a twofold seed of *Abraham*, to which they severally belong ; the temporal blessings, to his natural seed the *Jews*, and the spiritual blessings, to his spiritual seed, even all true believers that walk in the steps of his faith, *Jews* or *Gentiles*, *Rom.* iv. 11, 12, 16. believing *Gentiles* are *Abraham*’s spiritual seed, but then they have a right only to the spiritual blessings of the covenant, not to *all* the grants and privileges of it, for instance, not to the land of *Canaan* ; and as for their natural seed, these have no right, as such, to any of the blessings of this covenant,

temporal

^m In *ib.*

temporal or spiritual; for either they are the natural, or the spiritual seed of *Abraham*; not his natural seed, no one will say that; not his spiritual seed, for only believers are such; *they which are of faith* (believers) *the same are the children of Abraham*; and if ye be *Christ's*, (i. e. believers) *then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise*; and it is time enough to claim the promise, and the grants and privileges of it, be they what they will, when they appear to be believers; and as for the natural seed of believing *Gentiles*, there is not the least mention made of them in *Abraham's* covenant.

—5. Since *Abraham's* seed were not admitted into covenant with him, by any visible rite or token, no not by circumcision, which was not a rite of admission into the covenant, but a token of the continuance of it to his natural seed, and of their distinction from other nations, until the Messiah came; and since therefore baptism cannot succeed it as such, nor are the one or the other seals of the covenant of grace, as I have elsewhere^o proved, and shall not now repeat it; upon the whole, this second argument can be of no force in favour of infant-baptism: and here, if any where, is the proper time and place for this gentleman to ask for the *repeal* of this *antient privilege*, as he calls it^p, of infants being taken into covenant with their parents, or to shew when it was repealed; to which I answer, that the covenant made with *Abraham*, into which his natural seed were taken with him, so far as it concerned them as such, or was a national covenant, it was abolished and disannulled, when
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^o The divine right of infant-baptism disproved, p. 56—61.

^p Reasonable service, &c. p. 16.

the people of the *Jews* were cut off as a nation, and as a church; when the *Mosaic* dispensation was put an end unto, by the coming, sufferings, and death of Christ, and by the destruction of that people on their rejection of him; when God wrote a *Loammi* upon them, and said *ye are not my people, and I will not be your God*, Hof. i. 9. when he *took his staff, beauty, and cut it asunder, that he might break his covenant he had made with this people*, Zech. xi. 10. when the old covenant and old ordinances were removed, and the old church-state utterly destroyed, and a new church-state was set up, and new ordinances appointed; and for which new rules were given; and to which none are to be admitted, without the observance of them; which leads me to

The *third* argument taken from the commission of Christ for baptism, *Matt. xxviii. 19.* and from the *natural* and *necessary* sense in which the apostles would understand it^a; tho' this gentleman owns that it is delivered in such general terms, as not certainly to determine whether adult believers only, or the infants also of such are to be baptized; and if so, then surely no argument can be drawn from it for admitting infants to baptism. And

1. The rendring of the words, *disciple* or *profelyte all nations, baptizing them*, will not help the cause of infant-baptism; for one can't be a profelyte to any religion, unless he is taught it, and embraces and professes it; tho' had our Lord used a word which conveyed such an idea, the evangelist *Matthew* was not at a loss for a proper word or phrase to express it by; and doubtless would have made use of another clear and

^a lb. p. 19—22.

and exprefs, as he does in ch. xxiii. 15.—2. The fuppositions this writer makes, that if, inftead of *baptizing them*, it had been faid *circumcifing them*, the apoftles without any farther warrant would have naturally and juftly thought, that upon profelyting the *Gentile* parent, and circumcifing him, his infants alfo were to be circumcifed: or if the *twelve patriarchs* of old had had a divine command given them, to go into *Egypt, Arabia, &c.* and teach them the God of Abraham, *circumcifing them*, they would have underftood it as authorizing them to perform this ceremony not upon the parent only, but alfo upon the infants of fuch as believed on the God of *Abraham*. As thefe fuppositions are without foundation, fo I greatly queftion whether they would have been fo underftood, without fome instructions and explanations; and befides, the cafes put are not parallel to this before us, fince the circumcifion of infants was enjoined and praftifed before fuch a fupposed commiffion and command; whereas the baptifm of infants was neither commanded nor praftifed before this commiffion of Chrift; and therefore could not lead them to any fuch thought as this, whatever the other might do.—3. The characters and circumftances of the apoftles to whom the commiffion was given, will not at all conclude that they apprehended infants to be actually included; fome in which they are reprefented being entirely falfe, and others nothing to the purpofe: *Jews* they were indeed, but men that knew that the covenant of circumcifion was not ftill in force, but abolifhed—Men, who could never have obferved that the infants of believers with their parents had always been admitted into covenant, and

passed

passed under the same initiating rite —Men, who could not know, that the *Gentiles* were to be taken into a joint participation of all the privileges of the *Jewish* church ; but must know that both believing *Jews* and *Gentiles* were to constitute a new church-state, and to partake of new privileges and ordinances, which the *Jewish* church knew nothing of—Men, who were utter strangers to the baptism of *Gentile* proselytes, to the *Jewish* religion, and of their infants ; and to any baptism, but the ceremonial ablutions, before the times of *John* the *Baptist*—Men, who were not tenacious of their antient rites after the Spirit was poured down upon them at *Pentecost*, but knew they were now abolished, and at an end—Men, tho' they had seen little children brought to Christ to have his hands laid on them, yet had never seen an infant baptized in their days——Men, who tho' they knew that infants were sinners, and under a sentence of condemnation, and needed remission of sin and justification, and that baptism was a means of leading the faith of adult persons to Christ for them ; yet knew that it was not by baptism, but by the blood of Christ that these things are obtained—Men, that knew that Christ came to set up a new church-state ; not national as before, but congregational ; not consisting of carnal men, and of infants without understanding ; but of spiritual and rational men, believers in Christ ; and therefore could not be led to conclude that infants were comprehended in the commission : nor is Christ's *silence* with respect to infants to be construed into a strong and most manifest *presumption* in their favour, which would be *presumption* indeed ; or his not *excepting* them, a *permission*

mission or *order* to admit them : persons capable of making such constructions, are capable of doing and saying any thing. I hasten to

The *fourth* argument drawn from the *evident* and *clear consequences* of other passages of *scripture*^r, as

1. From *Rom. xi. 17.* and *if some of the branches be broken off*, &c. here let it be noted, that the *olive-tree* is not the *Abrahamic* covenant or church, into which the *Gentiles* were grafted; for they never were grafted into the *Jewish* church, that with all its peculiar ordinances being abolished by Christ; signified by the shaking of the heaven and the earth, and the removing of things shaken, *Heb. xii. 26, 27.* but the Gospel church-state, out of which the unbelieving *Jews* were left, and in which the believing *Gentiles* were engrafted, but not in the stead of the unbelieving *Jews*; and by the *root* and *fatness* of the olive-tree are meant, not the religious privileges and grants belonging to the *Jewish* covenant or church, which the *Gentiles* had nothing to do with, and are abolished; but the privileges and ordinances of the Gospel-church, which they with the believing *Jews* jointly partook of, being incorporated together in the same church-state; and which as it is the meaning of *Rom. xi. 17.* so of *Eph. iii. 6.* in all which there is not the least syllable of baptism, and much less of infant-baptism; or of the faith of a parent grafting his children with himself, into the church or covenant-relation to God; which is a mere chimaera, that has no foundation either in reason or scripture.

2. From *Mark x. 14.* *Suffer little children to come unto me*, &c. and *John iii. 5.* *Except any*

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^r *Ib.* p. 23—28.

one is born of water, &c. from these two passages put together, it is said, the right of *infants* to baptism may be clearly inferred; for *in one* they are declared actually to *have a place* in God's kingdom or church, and yet into *it*, the *other* as expressly says, *none can be admitted* without being baptized. But supposing the *former* of these texts is to be understood of infants not in a metaphorical sense, or of such as are compared to infants for humility, &c. which sense some *versions* lead unto, and in which way some *Pædobaptists* interpret the words, particularly *Calvin*, but literally; then by *the kingdom of God* is not meant the visible church on earth, or a Gospel church-state, which is not national, but congregational; consisting of persons gathered out of the world by the grace of God, and that make a public profession of the name of Christ, which infants are incapable of, and so are not taken into it: besides, this sense would prove too much, and what this writer would not chuse to give into, *viz.* that infants having a place in this kingdom or church, must have a right to all the privileges of it; to the Lord's supper, as well as to baptism; and ought to be treated in all respects as other members of it. Wherefore it should be interpreted of the kingdom of glory, into which we doubt not that such as these in the text are admitted; and then the strength of our Lord's argument lies here; that since he came to save such infants as these, as well as adult persons, and bring them to heaven, they should not be hindered from being brought to him, to be touched by him, and healed of their bodily diseases: and so the *other* text is to be understood of the kingdom of God or heaven,

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in the same sense ; but not of water-baptism as necessary to it, or that without which there is no entrance into it ; which mistaken, shocking and stupid sense of them, led *Austin*, and the *African* churches into a confirmed belief and practice of infant-baptism ; and this sense being imbibed, will justify him in all his monstrous absurd and impious tenets, as this writer calls them, about the ceremony of baptismal water, and the absolute necessity of it unto salvation : whereas the plain meaning of the words is, that except a man be born again of the grace of the Spirit of God, comparable to water, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God, or be a partaker of the heavenly glory ; or without the regenerating grace of the Spirit of God, which in *Tit. iii. 5.* is called *the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*, there can be no meetness for, no reception into, the kingdom of heaven ; and therefore makes nothing for the baptizing of infants.

3. A distinction between the children of believers, and of unbelievers is attempted from *1 Cor. vii. 14.* as if the one were in a visible covenant-relation to God, and the other not ; whereas the text speaks not of two sorts of children, but of one and the same, under supposed different circumstances ; and are to be understood not of any federal, but matrimonial holiness, as I have shewn elsewhere^s, to which I refer the reader. As for the *Queries* with which the argument is concluded, they are nothing to the purpose, unless it could be made out, that it is the will of God that infants should be baptized, and

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that

^s The divine right of infant-baptism disproved, &c. p. 73
—78.

that the baptism of them would give them the remission of sins, and justify their persons; neither of which are true: and of the same kind is the *Harangue* in the *introduction* to this treatise: and after all a poor, slender provision is made for the salvation of infants, according to this author's own scheme, which only concerns *the infants of believers*, and leaves all others to the *uncovenanted mercies* of God, as he calls them; seeing the former are but a very small part of the *thousands* of infants that every day languish under grievous distempers, are tortured, convulsed, and in piteous agonies give up the Ghost. Nor have I any thing to do with what this writer says, concerning the *moral purposes* and use of infant-baptism in religion; since the thing itself is without any foundation in the word of God: upon the whole, the baptism of infants is so far from being a *reasonable service*, that it is a *most unreasonable one*; since there is neither precept nor precedent for it in the sacred writings; and is neither to be proved by *scripture* nor *tradition*.

F I N I S.

A N
A N S W E R

T O A

WELCH CLERGYMAN'S
Twenty Arguments

In favour of


I N F A N T - B A P T I S M ,

W I T H

Some STRICTURES on what the said
AUTHOR has advanced concerning
the Mode of BAPTISM.



A N
A N S W E R
T O
Twenty Arguments, &c.

 Book some time ago being published in the *Welsh* language, entituled, “ A “ Guide to a saving Knowledge of “ the Principles and Duties of Religion, viz. Questions and Scriptural Answers, “ relating to the Doctrine contained in the “ Church Catechism,” &c. Some extracts out of it respecting the ordinance of baptism, its subject, and mode, being communicated to me, with a request from our friends in *Wales* to make some reply unto, and also to draw up some *reasons*, for dissenting from the church of *England*, both which I have undertook, and shall attempt in the following manner.

I shall take but little notice of what this author says, part. 5. p. 40. concerning sponors in baptism, but refer the reader to what is said of them, in the *reasons* for dissenting, hereunto
8 annexed

annexed. This writer himself owns, that the practice of having sureties is not particularly mentioned in scripture; only he would have it, that it has in general obtained in the churches from the primitive times, and was enacted by the powers which God has appointed, and whose ordinances are to be submitted to, when they are not contrary to those of God, *1 Pet. ii. 13. Rom. xiii. 1, 2. Tit. iii. 1, 2.* and must be allowed to be of great service, if the sureties fulfilled their engagements. The answer to all which is, that since it is not mentioned in scripture, it deserves no regard; at least, this can never recommend it to such, who make the Bible the rule of their faith and practice; and as to its obtaining in primitive times, it is indeed generally ascribed to pope *Hyginus*, as an invention of his; but the genuineness of the epistles attributed to him and others, is called in question by learned men, and are condemned by them as spurious; but were they genuine, neither his office nor his age would have much weight and authority with us, who are not to be determined by the decrees of popes and councils: the powers spoken of in the scriptures referred to, were *Heathen* magistrates, who surely had no authority to enact any thing relating to gospel-worship and ordinances; nor can it be reasonably thought they should; and submission and obedience to them, are required in things of a civil nature, not ecclesiastical, as the scope of the passages, and their context manifestly shew; nor has God given power and authority to any sect of men whatever, to enact laws and ordinances of religious worship; nor are we bound to submit to all ordinances of men in religious matters,

matters, that are not contrary to the appointments of God, that is, that are not expressly forbidden in his word; for by this means all manner of superstition and will-worship may be introduced. Oil and spittle in baptism are nowhere forbidden, nor is the baptizing of bells, yet these ordinances of men are not to be submitted to, and a multitude of others of the like kind: we are not only to take care to do what God has commanded, but to reject what he has not commanded; remembering the case of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, who offered strange fire to the Lord, which he commanded not. And whereas it is suggested, that this practice would be very serviceable were the engagements of sureties fulfilled, it is not practicable they should; it is impossible to do what they engage to do, even for themselves, and much less for others, as is observed in the *reasons*, before referred to.

But passing these things, I shall chiefly attend to the *twenty* arguments, which this writer has advanced in favour of infant-baptism, pag. 41

—45.

The *first* argument runs thus: “ Baptism,
 “ which is a seal of the covenant of grace, should
 “ not be forbid to the children of believers, seeing
 “ they are under condemnation thro’ the
 “ covenant of works; and if they are left without
 “ an interest in the covenant of grace, they
 “ then would be to their parents great distress,
 “ under a dreadful sentence of eternal condemnation,
 “ without any sign or promise of the
 “ mercy of God, or of an interest in Christ;
 “ being by nature children of wrath as others,
 “ and consequently without any hope of salvation,
 “ if they die in their infancy.” In which

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there are some things true, and others false, and nothing that can be improved into an argument in favour of infant-baptism. 1. It is true that the infants of believers, as well as others, are by nature the children of wrath, and under condemnation thro' the covenant of works; so all mankind are as considered in *Adam*, and in consequence of his sin and fall, see *Rom. v. 12, 18*. —But, 2. It is not baptism that can save them from wrath and condemnation; a person may be baptized in water, and yet not saved from wrath to come, and still lie under the sentence of condemnation, being notwithstanding that, in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, as the case of *Simon Magus* shews. Tho' this writer seems to be of opinion, that baptism is a saving ordinance, and that a person cannot be saved without it; and indeed he expressly says, p. 27. that in general it is necessary to salvation; as if salvation was by it, (which is a popish notion) and there was none without it; but the instance of the penitent thief, is a proof to the contrary; the text does not say, he that is baptized shall be saved, but *he that believeth and is baptized*; nor is it any where suggested, that a person dying without baptism shall be damned. It is Christ only, and not baptism, that saves from wrath and condemnation.—3. Being unbaptized, does not leave without an interest in the covenant of grace, or exclude from the hope of salvation, or the mercy of God, or an interest in Christ; persons may have an interest in all these, and yet not be baptized. See the strange contradiction men run into when destitute of truth; one while the covenant of grace is said to be made with believers, and their seed,

as in the next argument, and so their infants being in it, have a right to baptism ; at another time it is baptism that puts them into the covenant ; and if they are not baptized they are left without interest in it, and to the great grief of their parents under a dreadful sentence of eternal condemnation. But, 4. as the salvation of an infant dying in its infancy is one of the secret things which belong unto the Lord, a judicious christian parent will leave it with him ; and find more relief from his distress by hoping in the grace and mercy of God thro' Christ, and in the virtue and efficacy of his blood and righteousness, which may be applied unto it without baptism, than he can in baptism ; which he may observe, may be administered to a person and yet be damned. For, 5. baptism is no seal of the covenant of grace, nor does it give any person an interest in it, or seal it to them ; a person may be baptized, and yet have no interest in the covenant, as *Simon Magus* and others, and to whom it was never sealed ; and on the other hand, a person may be in the covenant of grace, and it may be sealed to him, and he assured of his interest in it, and not yet baptized : the blood of Christ is the seal of the covenant, and the spirit of Christ is the sealer of the saint's interest in it. And, after all, 6. if baptism has such virtue in it, as to give an interest in the covenant of grace, to be a sign and promise of mercy, and of our interest in Christ, and furnish out hope of salvation, and secure from wrath and condemnation, why should not compassion be shewn to the children of unbelievers, who are in the same state and condition by nature ? for I observe all along, that in this and the follow-

ing arguments, baptism is wholly restrained to the children of believers; upon the whole, the argument from the state of infants to their baptism is impertinent and fruitless; since there is no such efficacy in baptism, to deliver them from it^a.

The *second* argument is: "The children of believers should be admitted to baptism, since as the covenant of works, and the seal of it belonged to *Adam* and his children, so the covenant of grace, and the seal thereof belongs thro' Christ, to believers and their children:" to which it may be replied, 1. That it is indeed true, that the covenant of works belonged to *Adam* and his posterity, he being a federal head unto them; but then it does not appear, that that covenant had any seal belonging to it, since it needed none, nor was it proper it should have any, seeing it was not to continue. And if the tree of life is intended, as I supposed it is, whatever that might be a sign of, it was no seal of any thing, nor did it belong to *Adam's* children, who were never suffered to partake of it.—2. There is a great disparity between *Adam* and believers, and the relation they stand in to their respective offspring: *Adam* stood as a common head and representative to all his posterity, not so believers to theirs; they are no common heads unto them, or representatives of them; wherefore tho' the covenant of works belonged to *Adam* and his posterity, it does not follow, that the covenant of grace belongs to believers and their children, they not standing in the same relation he

^a See the introduction to the baptism of infants, a reasonable service, &c. to which this is an answer.

he did. There never were but two covenant-heads, *Adam* and Christ, and between them, and them only, the parallel will run, and in this form; that as the covenant of works belonged to *Adam* and his seed, so the covenant of grace belongs to Christ and his seed.—3. As it does not appear there was any seal belonging to the covenant of works, so we have seen already, that baptism is not the seal of the covenant of grace; wherefore this argument in favour of infant-baptism is weak and frivolous; the reason this author adds to strengthen the above argument, is very lamely and improperly expressed, and impertinently urged; “for we are not to imagine, that there is more efficacy in the covenant of works, to bring condemnation on the children of the unbelieving, thro’ the fall of *Adam*; than there is virtue in the covenant of grace, thro’ the mediation of the son of God, the second *Adam*, to bring salvation to the seed of those that believe, *Rom. v. 15, 18.*” For the covenant of works being broken by the fall of *Adam*, brought condemnation not on the children of the unbelieving only, but of believers also, even on all his posterity, to whom he stood a federal head; and so the covenant of grace, of which Christ the second *Adam* is the mediator, brings salvation not to the seed of those that believe, many of whom never believe, and to whom salvation is never brought, nor they to that; but to all Christ’s spiritual seed and offspring, to whom he stands a federal head; which is the sense of the passages of scripture referred to, and serves no ways to strengthen the cause of infant-baptism.

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The *third* argument runs thus. “ The seed
 “ of believers are to be baptized into the same
 “ covenant with themselves; seeing infants while
 “ infants, as natural parts of their parents, are
 “ included in the same threatnings, which are
 “ denounced against wicked parents, and in the
 “ same promises as are made to godly parents,
 “ being branches of one root, *Rom.* xi. 16. *Deut.*
 “ iv. 37, 40. and xxviii. 1,—4. and xxx. 6, 19.
 “ *Psf.* cii. 28. *Pro.* xi. 21. and xx. 7. *Jer.* xxxii.
 “ 38, 39. *Exod.* xx. 5. and xxxiv. 7. *Deut.*
 “ xxviii. 15, 18, 45, 46. *Psf.* xxi. 10. and cxix.
 “ 9, 10. *Is.* xiv. 20, 21. *Jer.* xxii. 28, and
 “ xxxvi. 31.” Here let it be observed—1. that
 it is pleaded that infants should be baptized into
 the same covenant with their parents, meaning
 no doubt the covenant of grace; that is, should
 by baptism be brought into the covenant as it
 is expressed in Arg. 7th, or else I know not what
 is meant by being baptized into the same cove-
 nant; and yet in the preceding argument it is
 urged, that the covenant of grace belongs to the
 infants of believers, that is, they are in it, and
 therefore are to be baptized: an instance this of
 the glaring contradiction before observed. —
 2. Threatnings indeed are made to wicked pa-
 rents and their children, partly to shew the hei-
 nousness of their sins, and to deter them from
 them; and partly to express God’s hatred of
 sin, and his punitive justice; and also to point
 out original sin and the corruption of nature in
 infants, and what they must expect when grown
 up if they follow the examples of their parents,
 and commit the same or like sins; but what is
 all this to infant-baptism? Why, 3. In like
 manner promises are made to godly parents and
 their

their children, and several passages are referred to in proof it ; some of these are of a temporal nature, and are designed to stir up and encourage good men to the discharge of their duty, and have no manner of regard to any spiritual or religious privilege ; and such as are of a spiritual nature, which respect conversion, sanctification, &c. when these take place on the seed of believers, then, and not till then, do they appear to have any right to Gospel-ordinances, such as baptism and the Lord's supper ; wherefore the argument from promises to such privileges, before the things promised are bestowed, is of no force.

The *fourth* argument is much of the same kind with the foregoing, *viz.* “ There are many
 “ examples recorded in scripture wherein the in-
 “ fants of ungodly men are involved with their
 “ parents in heavy judgments ; therefore as the
 “ judgment and curse which belong to the
 “ wicked, belong also to their seed, so the pri-
 “ vileges of the saints belong also to their off-
 “ spring, unless they reject the God of their fa-
 “ thers. The justice and wrath of God is not
 “ more extensive to destroy the offspring of the
 “ wicked, than his grace and mercy is to save
 “ those of the faithful ; therefore baptism, the
 “ sign of the promises of God's mercy, is not
 “ to be denied to such infants, *Numb. xiv. 33.*
 “ *2 Kings v. 27. Josh. vii. 24, 25. Jer. xxii. 28.*”
 The answer given to the former may suffice for this : to which may be added—1. That the in-
 flicting judgments on the children of some wick-
 ed men is an instance of the sovereign justice of
 God, and his bestowing privileges on the chil-
 dren of some good men is an instance of his so-
 vereign

vereign grace, who punishes whom he will, and has mercy on whom he will : for, 2. God does not always proceed in this method ; he sometimes bestows the blessings of his grace on the children of the wicked, and inflicts deserved punishment on the children of good men ; the seed of the wicked don't always inherit their curses, nor the seed of the godly their blessings ; wherefore such dispensations of God can be no rule of conduct to us, and particularly with respect to baptism.—And, 3. Whatsoever privileges belong to the seed of believers we are very desirous they should enjoy ; nor would we deprive them of any ; let it be shewn that baptism belongs to them as such, and we will by no means deny it to them. But, 4. Whereas it is said that the privileges of saints belong to their offspring, adding this exceptive clause, “ unless “ they reject the God of their fathers ; ” it seems most proper, prudent and adviseable, particularly in the case before us, to wait and see whether they will receive or reject, follow or depart from the God of their fathers.

The *fifth* argument is formed thus : “ The “ children of believers are to be baptized now “ as those of the Jews were circumcised formerly ; for circumcision was then the seal of “ the covenant, as baptism is now, which Christ “ has appointed in lieu thereof. *Abraham* and “ his son *Ismael*, and all that were born in “ his house, were circumcised the same day ; “ and God commanded all *Israel* to bring their “ children into the covenant with them, to give “ them the seal of it, and circumcise them, “ *Gen. xvii. Deut. xxix. 10—12. Col. ii. 11,* “ *12.*” To all which I reply, 1. that circum-
cision

cision was no seal of the covenant of grace ; if it was, the covenant of grace from *Adam* to *Abraham* was without a seal. It is called a *sign* in *Gen.* xvii. the passage referred to, but not a seal : it is indeed in *Rom.* iv. 11. said to be *a seal of the righteousness of the faith*, not to infants, not to *Abraham's* natural seed, only to himself ; assuring him that he should be the father of many nations, in a spiritual sense, and that the righteousness of faith he had, should come upon the *Gentiles* ; wherefore this mark or sign continued until the gospel, in which the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, was preached unto the *Gentiles*, and received by them ; to which may be added, that there were many living who were interested in the covenant of grace, when circumcision was appointed, and yet it was not ordered to them as it would, had it been a seal of that covenant ; and on the other hand, it was enjoined such who had no interest in the covenant of grace, and to whom it could not be a seal of it, as *Ismael*, *Esau*, and others. And, 2. it has been shewn already, that baptism is no seal of the said covenant. Nor, 3. is it appointed by Christ in lieu of circumcision, nor does it succeed it ; there is no agreement between them in their subjects, use, and manner of administration ; and what most clearly shews that baptism did not come in the room of circumcision, is, that it was in force and use before circumcision was abolished ; which was not till the death of Christ ; whereas years before that, multitudes were baptized, and our Lord himself ; and therefore it being in force before the other was out of date, cannot with any propriety be said to succeed it.

This writer, p. 28. has advanced several things to prove that baptism came in the room of circumcision.

1st. He argues from the Lord's supper being instead of the paschal Lamb, that therefore baptism must be in the room of circumcision, which is ceased; or else there must be a deficiency. But it does not appear that the Lord's supper is in the room of the passover; it followed that indeed in the institution and celebration of it by Christ, but it was not instituted by him to answer the like purposes as the passover; nor are the same persons admitted to the one as the other; and besides, was the Lord's supper in the room of the passover, it does not follow from thence that baptism must be in the room of circumcision: but then it is said there will be a deficiency; a deficiency of what? all those ceremonial rites, the passover and circumcision, with many others, pointed at Christ, and have had their fulfilment in him; he is come, and is the body and substance of them; and therefore there can be no deficiency, since he is in the room of them, and is the fulfilling end of them; nor can any other but he, with any propriety, be said to come in the room of them. And there can be no deficiency of grace, since he is full of it, nor of ordinances, for he has appointed as many as he thought fit.

2dly. This author urges, that it is proper there should be two sacraments under the gospel, as there were two under the law, one for adult persons, the other for their children, as were the paschal Lamb and circumcision. But if every thing that was typical of Christ, as those two were, were sacraments, it might as well be said there

there were two and twenty sacraments under the law as two; and according to this way of reasoning there should be as many under the gospel. Moreover, of these two, one was not for adult persons only, and the other for their children; for they were each of them both for adult persons and children too; they that partook of the one had a right to the other; all that were circumcised might eat of the passover, and none but they; and if this is a rule and direction to us now, if infants have a right to baptism, they ought to be admitted to the Lord's supper.

3dly. Baptism, he says, is appointed for a like end as circumcision, namely for the admission of persons into the church, which is not true; circumcision was appointed for another end, and not for that; the *Jewish* church was national, and as soon as an infant was born, it was a member of it, even before circumcision, and therefore it could not be admitted by it; nor is baptism for any such end, nor are persons admitted into a visible church of Christ by it; they may be baptized, and yet not members of a church: what church was the eunuch admitted into, or did he become a member of, by his baptism?

4thly. This writer affirms, that the Holy Spirit calls baptism circumcision, *i. e.* the circumcision made without hands, having the same spiritual design, and is termed the christian circumcision, or that of Christ, it answering to circumcision, and being ordained by Christ in the room of it. To say that baptism is ordained by Christ in the room of circumcision, is begging the question, nor is there any thing in it that answers to circumcision, nor is it called the

circumcision of Christ, in *Col. ii. 11.* which I suppose is the place referred to; for not that, but internal circumcision, the circumcision of the heart is meant, which Christ by his spirit is the author of, and therefore called his; and the same is the circumcision made without hands, in opposition to circumcision in the flesh, it being by the powerful and efficacious grace of God, without the assistance of men; nor can baptism with any shew of reason, or appearance of truth, be so called, since that is made with the hands of men, and therefore can never be the circumcision there meant.

5thly. He infers that baptism is appointed in the room of circumcision, from their signifying like things, as original corruption, regeneration, or the circumcision of the heart, *Deut. xxx. 6.* *Tit. iii. 5.* being seals of the covenant of grace, *Rom. iv. 11.* initiating ordinances, and alike laying men under an obligation to put off the body of sin, and walk in newness of life, *Rom. vi. 4, 6.* and also being marks of distinction between church-members and others, *Ezek. xvi. 21.* *Matt. xvi. 26.* But baptism and circumcision do not signify the like things; baptism signifies the sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, which circumcision did not; nor does baptism signify original corruption, which it takes not away, nor regeneration which it does not give, but pre-requires it; nor is baptism meant in the passage referred to, *Tit. iii. 5.* nor are either of them seals of the covenant of grace, as has been shewn already; nor initiating ordinances, or what enter persons into a church-state: *Jewish* infants were church-members, before they were circumcised; and persons may be baptized,
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and yet not members of churches; and whatever obligations the one and the other may lay men under to live in newness of life, this can be no proof of the one coming in the room of the other. Circumcision was indeed a mark of distinction between the natural seed of *Abraham* and others; and baptism is a distinguishing badge, to be wore by those that believe in Christ, and put him on, and are his spiritual seed; but neither of them distinguish church-members from others; the passages referred to are impertinent. But I proceed to consider

The *sixth* argument in favour of infant-baptism, taken from the sameness of the covenant of grace made with *Jews* and *Gentiles*, of which circumcision was the seal; from the seal and dispensation of which, the *Jews* and their children are cut off, and the *Gentiles* and their seed are engrafted in, *Gal. iii. 14. Acts xv. 11. Rom. iv. 11. and xi. 15, 17.* in answer to which, let it be observed—1. That the covenant of grace is indeed the same in one age, and under one dispensation, as another; or as made with one sort of people as another, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*; the same blessings of it that came upon *Abraham*, come upon all believers, *Jews* or *Gentiles*; and the one are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the other; but then 2. The covenant of grace was not made with *Abraham* and his natural seed, or with all the *Jews* as such; nor is it made with *Gentiles* and their natural seed as such; but with Christ and his spiritual seed, and with them only, be they of what nation, or live they in what age they will. 3. Circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace, nor does *Rom. iv. 11.* prove it, as has been shewn already; and

and therefore nothing can be inferred from hence with respect to baptism. 4. The root or stock from whence the unbelieving *Jews* were cut off, and into which the believing *Gentiles* are engrafted, is not the covenant of grace, from which those who are interested in it, can never be cut off; but the Gospel church-state, from which the unbelieving *Jews* were rejected and left out, and the believing *Gentiles* took in, who partook of all the privileges of it, *Rom. xi. 17—25.* tho' no mention is made throughout the whole of the passage of the children of either; only of some being broken off thro' unbelief, and others standing by faith; and therefore can be of no service in the cause of infant-baptism.

The *seventh* argument is taken from the extent of the covenant of grace being the same under the New Testament, as before the coming of Christ, who came not to curtail the covenant, and render worse the condition of infants; if they were in the covenant before, they are so now; no spiritual privilege given to children or others can be made void, *Rom. xi. 29. Jer. xxx. 20.* to which may be replied—1. That the extent of the covenant as to the constitution of it, and persons interested in it, is always the same, having neither more nor fewer; but with respect to the application of it, it extends to more persons at one time than at another; and is more extensive under the Gospel dispensation than before, it being applied to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*; and with respect to the blessings and privileges of it, they are always the same, are never curtailed or made void, or taken away from those to whom they belong; which are all Christ's spiritual seed, and none else, be they *Jews* or *Gentiles*.

Gentiles. But 2. it should be proved that the infant-*seed* of believers, or their natural seed as such, were ever in the covenant of grace; or that any spiritual privileges were given to them as such; or it is impertinent to talk of curtailing the covenant, or taking away the privileges of the seed of believers—3. If even their covenant-interest could be proved, which it cannot, that gives no right to any ordinance, or to a positive institution without a divine direction; there were many who were interested in the covenant of grace, when circumcision was appointed, who yet had nothing to do with that ordinance—4. Baptism not being allowed to infants, does not make their condition worse than it was under the former dispensation; for as then circumcision could not save them, so neither would baptism were it administered to them; nor was circumcision really a privilege, but the reverse; and therefore the abrogation of it, without substituting any thing in its room, does not make the condition of infants the worse; and certain it is, that the condition of the infants of believing *Gentiles*, even tho' baptism is denied them, is much better than that of the infants of *Gentiles* before the coming of Christ; yea, even of the infants of *Jews* themselves; since they are born of christian parents, and so have a christian education, and the opportunity and advantage of hearing the Gospel preached, as they grow up, with greater clearness, and in every place^b where they are. The text in *Rom. xi. 29.* regards not external privileges, but internal grace; that in *Jer.*

XXX.

^b This also is an answer to what the author of *the baptism of infants a reasonable service* suggests in p. 7, 12, 16.

xxx. 20. respects not infants, but the posterity of the *Jews*; adult persons in the latter day.

The *eighth* argument is taken from the everlastingness of the covenant of grace, and runs thus; “the example of *Abraham* and the *Israelites* “ in circumcising their children according to the “ command of God, should oblige us to baptize “ our children; because circumcision was then “ a seal of the everlasting covenant, a covenant “ that was to last for ever, and not cease as “ the legal ceremonies; which God hath confirmed with an oath; and therefore can have “ suffered no alteration for the worse in any “ thing with respect to infants, *Gen. vii. 17.* “ *Heb. vi. 13, 18. Mic. vii. 18, 20. Gal. iii. 8.*”

The answer to which is—1. That the covenant of grace is everlasting, will never cease, nor admit of any alteration is certain; but the covenant of circumcision, which is called an everlasting covenant, *Gen. xvii. 7.* was only to continue during the *Mosaic* dispensation, or unto the times of the *Messiah*; and is so called for the same reason, and just in the same sense as the covenant of the priesthood with *Phinebas* is called, the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, *Numb. xxv. 13.*—2. Tho’ the covenant of grace is everlasting, and whatever is in that covenant, or ever was, will never be altered; yet it should be proved there is any thing in it with respect to infants, and particularly which lays any foundation for, or gives them any claim and right to baptism.—3. Tho’ circumcision was a sign and token of the covenant made with *Abraham*, and his natural seed, it never was any seal of the covenant of grace—And 4. the example of *Abraham* and others, in circumcising their children

dren according to the command of God, lays no obligation upon us to baptize ours, unless we had a command for their baptism, as they had for their circumcision.

The *ninth* argument is formed thus; "Baptism is to be administered to the seed of believers, because it is certainly very dangerous and blame-worthy, to neglect and despise a valuable privilege appointed by God from the beginning, to the offspring of his people." But it must be denied, and should be proved, that baptism is a privilege appointed by God from the beginning, to the offspring of his people; let it be shewn, if it can, when and where it was appointed by him. This argument is illustrated and enforced by various observations; as that "that soul was to be cut off that neglected circumcision; and no just excuse can be given for neglecting infant-baptism, which is ordained to be the seal of the covenant instead of circumcision:" but we have seen already, that baptism does not come in the room of circumcision, nor is it a seal of the covenant of grace; and there is good reason to be given for the neglect of infant-baptism, because it never was ordained and appointed of God. Moreover it is said, "that the seed of believers were formerly under the Old Testament, in the covenant together with their parents; and no one is able to shew that they have been cast out under the New, or that their condition is worse, and their spiritual privileges less, under the Gospel, than under the law:" but that believers with their natural seed as such, were together in the covenant of grace under the Old Testament, should not

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be

be barely affirmed, but proved, before we are put upon to shew that they are cast out under the New; tho' this writer himself, before in the *sixth* argument, talks of the *Jews* and their children being cut off from the seal and dispensation of the covenant; which can never be true of the covenant of grace; nor do we think that the condition of infants is worse, or their privileges less now, than they were before, tho' baptism is denied them, as has been observed already. It is further urged, that "it is not to be imagined without presumption, that Christ ever intended to cut them off from an ordinance, which God had given them a right unto;" nor do we imagine any such thing; nor can it be proved that God ever gave the ordinance of baptism to them. As for what this writer further observes, that had Christ took away circumcision without ordaining baptism in the room of it, for the children of believers; the *Jews* would have cried out against it as an excommunication of their children; and would have been a greater objection against him than any other; and would now be a hindrance of their conversion; and who, if they were converted, would have baptism or circumcision to be a seal of the covenant with them and their children, it deserves no answer; since the clamours, outcries, and objections of the *Jews*, and their practice on their legal principles, would be no rule of direction to us, were they made and gave into, since they would be without reason and truth; for tho' Christ came not to destroy the moral law, but to fulfil it, *Matt. v. 17.* yet he came to put an end to the ceremonial law, of which circumcision is a part, and did put an
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end to it^c: the text in *Jer.* xxx. 20. respects the restoration of the *Jews* in the latter day, but not their old ecclesiastical polity, which shall not be established again, but their civil liberties and privileges.

The *tenth* argument stands thus; “ Children
“ are to be baptized under the covenant of
“ grace, because all the covenants which God
“ ever made with men, were made not only
“ with them, but also with their children;”
and instances are given in *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham*,
Isaac and *Jacob*, *Levi*, *Phineas*, and *David*.
The covenant of works was indeed made with
Adam and his seed, in which covenant he was a
federal head to his offspring; but the covenant
of grace was not made with him and his seed,
he was no federal head in that; nor is that made
with all mankind, as it must, if it had been
made with *Adam* and his seed: this is an instance
against the argument, and shews that *all* the
covenants that ever God made with men, were
not made with them and their seed; for certainly
the covenant of grace was made with *Adam*,
and made known to him, *Gen.* iii. 15. and yet
not with his seed with him; nor can any in-
stance be given of the covenant of grace be-
ing made with any man, and his natural seed.
There was a covenant made with *Noah* and his
posterity, securing them from a future deluge,
but not a covenant of grace securing them
from everlasting destruction; for then it must
have been made with all mankind, since all
are the posterity of *Noah*; and where then is

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^c Which may likewise be an answer to the same thing
hinted by the author of *the baptism of infants a reasonable*
service, p. 28.

the distinction of the seed of believers and of unbelievers? Besides *Ham*, one of *Noah's* immediate offspring, was not interested in the covenant of grace. As for the covenant made with *Abraham*, his son *Ismael* was excluded from it, *Gen. xvii. 19, 20, 21.* and of *Isaac's* two sons one of them was rejected, *Rom. ix. 10, 11, 12, 13.* and all were not *Israel* that were of *Israel*, or of *Jacob*, ver. 6. The covenant of the priesthood was indeed made with *Levi* and *Phinehas*, and their posterity, and though it is called an *everlasting* one, it is now made void; nor is there any other in its room with the ministers of the word and their posterity; and yet no outcry is made of the children of gospel-ministers being in a worse condition, and their privileges less than those of the priests and levites: and as for *David*, the sad estate of his family, and the wicked behaviour of most of his children, shew that the covenant of grace was not made with him, and his natural offspring; and whatever covenants those were that were made with these persons, they furnish out no argument proving the covenant of grace to be made with believers and their carnal seed, and still less any argument in favour of infant-baptism ^d.

The *eleventh* argument is; “ The seed of believers ought to be baptized under the covenant of grace, otherwise they would be reckoned pagans, and the offspring of infidels and idolaters, to whom there is neither a promise nor any sign of hope; whereas the scripture makes a difference, calling them *holy* on account

^d Let this also be observed, together with the answer to the first argument of the author of *the baptism of infants a reasonable service*, &c. p. 14.

“ count of their relation to the holy covenant,
 “ when either their father or mother believe,
 “ 1 Cor. vii. 14. *disciples*, *Acts* xv. 10. reckoning
 “ them among them that *believe*, because of their
 “ relation to the household of faith, *Matt.* xviii. 6.
 “ styling them *the seed of the blessed*, and their
 “ offspring with them, *Is.* lxxv. 23. accounting
 “ them *for a generation to the Lord*, *Pf.* xxii. 30.
 “ as *David* says; who, ver. 10. observes, that
 “ God was his God from his mother’s belly;
 “ and also calling them the *children of God*, *Ezek.*
 “ xvi. 20, 21. therefore they ought to be dedi-
 “ cated to him by that ordinance which he has
 “ appointed for that purpose.” To all which
 may be replied, 1. that the children of believers
 are by nature children of wrath even as others,
 and are no better than others; and were they
 baptized, they would not be at all the better
 christians for it. Though, 2. it will be allow-
 ed that there is a difference between the offspring
 of believers, and those of infidels, pagans and
 idolaters; and the former have abundantly the
 advantage of the latter, as they have a christian
 education; and consequently as they are brought
 up under the means of grace, there is hope of
 them; and it may be expected that the promise
 of God to such who use the means will be ac-
 complished. But, 3. the characters mentioned
 either do not belong to children, or not for the
 reason given; and those that do, don’t furnish
 out an argument for their baptism. Children
 are said to be *holy*, born in lawful wedlock, 1 Cor.
 vii. 14. not on account of their relation to the
 holy covenant, but on account of the holiness
 of an unbelieving parent, which surely can’t be
 a federal holiness, but a matrimonial one; the
 marriage

marriage of a believer with an unbeliever being valid, or otherwise their children must be *unclean* or illegitimate, and not *holy* or legitimate. The disciples in *Acts* xv. 10. are not young children but adult persons, the converted *Gentiles*, on whom the false teachers would have put the yoke of the ceremonial law, and particularly circumcision. The little ones reckoned among those that believe in Christ, *Matt.* xviii. 6. were not infants in age, but the apostles of our Lord, who were little in their own account, and in the account of others, whom to offend was criminal, highly provoking to Christ, and of dangerous consequence. The text, *Ij.* lxv. 23. speaks of the spiritual seed of the church, and not the carnal seed of believers^e; and these are the same who are accounted to the Lord for a generation, even a spiritual seed that shall serve him, *Psf.* xxii. 30. and the words in ver. 10. are the words not of *David*, but of Christ. And the sons and daughters born to God, and whom he calls his children, *Ezek.* xvi. 20, 21. were so, not by grace or by covenant, but by creation. And from the whole there is not the least reason why the children of believers should be dedicated to God by baptism, which is an ordinance that never was appointed by him for any such purpose.

The *twelfth* argument is; “ The seed of believers are to be baptized, because church-relation belongs to them, as citizenship belongs to the children of freemen; and it is by baptism that they are first admitted into the visible church; and there is neither covenant nor promise of salvation out of the church; for
“ the

^e Vide *ibid*, p. 24.

“ the church of Christ is his kingdom on earth,
 “ and Christ says this belongs to children, *Mark*
 “ x. 13, 14. In answer to which, 1. there is a
 manifest contradiction in the argument. Church-
 relation belongs to infants, that is, they are re-
 lated to the church, and members of it, and
 therefore should be baptized; and yet they are
 first admitted into the church by baptism; what
 a contradiction this! in it, and out of it, related,
 and not related to it, at one and the same time.
 — 2. Church-membership does not pass from
 father to son, nor is it by birth, as citizenship,
 or the freedom of cities; the one is a civil, the
 other an ecclesiastical affair; the one is of nature,
 the other of grace; natural birth gives a right
 to the one, but the spiritual birth or regenera-
 tion only intitles to the other.— 3. Church-mem-
 bership gives no right to baptism, but rather
 baptism to church-membership, or however is
 a qualification requisite to it; persons ought
 to be baptized before they are church-members;
 and if they are church-members, and not rege-
 nerate persons and believers in Christ, for such
 may be in a church, they have no right to bap-
 tism.— 4. To talk of there being no covenant
 or promise of salvation out of the church, smells
 rank of popery. The covenant and promise of
 salvation are not made with and to persons as
 members of churches, or as in a visible church-
 state, but with and to the elect of God in Christ,
 and with persons only considered in him; who
 have an interest in the covenant and promise of
 salvation, though they may not be in a visible
 church-state; and doubtless many are saved who
 never were members of a visible church.— 5. The
 kingdom of God in *Mark* x. 13, 14. be it the
 church

church of Christ on earth, or eternal glory in heaven, only belongs to such persons who are like to little children for their meekness and humility, and freedom from malice and rancor, as ver. 15. shows. 6. Could infants in age, or the seed of believers as such be here meant, and the kingdom of God be understood of Christ's visible church, and they as belonging to it, it would prove more than this writer chuses; namely, that they have a right to all church-privileges, and particularly and especially to the Lord's supper.

The *thirteenth* argument is; "Children are
 " the lambs of Christ's flock and sheep; and
 " the lambs ought not to be kept out of Christ's
 " fold, nor hindered from the washing that is in
 " his blood; he particularly promises to be
 " their shepherd; and his Spirit has declared,
 " that little children should be brought to him
 " under the Gospel, in the arms, and on the
 " shoulders of their parents, *If. xl. 11.* and
 " *xlix. 22. Cant. vi. 6. John xxi. 15.*" on which
 may be observed—1. That there is indeed mention made of the lambs of Christ in *If. xl. 11. John xxi. 15.* which he gathers in his arms, and ordered *Peter* to feed; yet not infants in age are intended in either places, but adult persons, weak believers, who in comparison of others, because of their small degree of knowledge and strength, are called *lambs*; and are to be gently and tenderly dealt with; and such as these are not kept out of Christ's fold, but are received into it, tho' weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations; and are fed with knowledge and understanding, which infants in age are not capable of—2. The infant-seed of believers are

no where called the sheep of Christ, nor has he promised to be the shepherd of them; let the passages be directed to, if it can be, where this is said—3. Those who are truly the lambs and sheep of Christ, are not hindered from the washing of his blood; tho' that is not to be done, nor is it done by baptism; persons may be washed with water, as *Simon Magus*, and yet not washed in the blood of Christ; *Cant. vi. 6.* does not intend washing in either sense; but either the regenerating grace of the Spirit, or the purity of conversation, and respects not infants at all—4. Nor is it declared by the Spirit of God, that parents should bring their children to Christ in their arms, and on their shoulders; the passage in *If. xlix. 22.* brought in support of it, speaks of the spiritual seed of the church, and not of the carnal seed of believers; and of their being brought, not in the arms and on the shoulders of their natural parents, but of the *Gentiles*; and not to Christ, but to the church, thro' the ministry of the word in the latter day, in which the *Gentiles* would be very assisting.

The *fourteenth* argument runs thus: “ The
 “ feed of the faithful ought to be baptized, be-
 “ cause they were partakers of all the former
 “ baptisms mentioned in scripture, as the chil-
 “ dren of *Noah* in the Ark, *1 Pet. iii. 20.* the
 “ *Israelites* at the Red Sea, and in the cloud,
 “ *1 Cor. x. 1, 2. Exod. xii. 37.* several children
 “ were baptized with the baptism of the spirit,
 “ for several were filled with the Holy Ghost
 “ from their mother's womb; all the children
 “ of *Bethlehem* under two years old, with the
 “ baptism of martyrdom, *Matt. ii.* and many
 “ children with *John's* baptism, since he bapti-
 “ zed M

“zed the whole country.” But, 1. it unhappily falls out for the cause of infant-baptism, that *Noah's* children in the Ark were all adult and married persons, *Gen. vii. 7.*—2. That there were children among the *Israelites* when they were baptised in the cloud, and in the sea, is not denied; but then it should be observed, that they did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, and therefore, if this does not give a sufficient claim to infants to partake of the Lord's supper, neither will the other prove their right to baptism: moreover, if any arguments can be formed from this and the former instance, for the administration of baptism under the New Testament, they will clearly shew, that it ought to be administered by immersion; for, as in the former, when the fountains of the great deep were broke up under them, and the windows of heaven were opened over them, they were as persons immersed in water; so when the waters of the Red Sea stood up on each side, and the cloud was over the *Israelites*, they were as it were overwhelmed in water.—3. Tho' this writer says, that several children were filled with the Holy Ghost from their mother's womb, yet we read but of one that was so, *John* the baptist, a very extraordinary person, and extraordinarily qualified for extraordinary work, an instance not to be mentioned in ordinary cases; besides, it is a rule in logic, *a particulari ad universalem non valet consequentia*, from a particular to an universal, the consequence is not conclusive. Moreover, in what sense *John* was filled with the Holy Ghost so early, is not easy to say; and be it what it will, the same cannot be proved of the seed of believers in general; and could it, it would give no right

to baptism, without a positive institution; it gave no right to *John* himself.—4. That the infants at *Bethlehem* were murdered, will be granted, but that they suffered martyrdom for Christ, will not easily be proved: since they knew nothing of the matter, and were not conscious on what account their lives were taken away.—5. That many or any children were baptized with *John's* baptism, we deny, and call upon this writer to prove it, and even to give us one single instance of it; what he suggests is no evidence of it, as that the whole country in general were baptized by him, who could not be all childless; but I hope he does not think, that every individual person in the country of *Judea* was baptized by *John*; it is certain, that there were many even adult persons that were refused by him; and such as were baptized by him, were such as confessed their sins, which infants could not do, *Matt. iii. 5, 6, 7.* and as to the probability of the displeasure of *Jewish* parents, suggested if their children had not been baptized by *John*, since they were used, and under a command of God, to bring their children to the covenant and ordinances of God, *Gen. xvii. Deut. xxix. 10, 13. Joel. ii. 16.* it deserves no regard, since whatever probability there was of their displeasure, tho' I see none, there could be no just ground for it; since in the instances given, they had the command of God for what they did, for this they had none.

The *fifteenth* argument is: “ ’Tis contrary to
 “ the apostle’s practice, to leave any unbaptized
 “ in christian families, for they baptized whole
 “ families when the heads of them believed, as
 “ the families of *Lydia*, the jailor, and *Stephanas*;

“ and ’tis evident, that the words, family and
 “ household, in scripture, mean chiefly children,
 “ sons, daughters, and little ones, compare,
 “ *Exod. i. 1, 7.* with *Gen. xlv. 5.* and *xlv.*
 “ *18, 19.* compare, *1 Sam. xxvii. 3.* with *Ch.*
 “ *xxx. 6.* *1 Tim. iii. 8.* *Gen. xxx. 30.* *Numb. iii.*
 “ *15.*” To which I reply, that whatever these
 words signify in some places of scripture, tho’
 in the passages mentioned they don’t chiefly in-
 tend new born infants, but grown persons; it
 should be proved, that there were infants in
 families and households that were baptized, and
 that these were baptized together with the
 head of the family; for it is certain, there are
 many families and households that have no little
 children in them; and as for those that are
 instanced in, it is not probable that there were
 any in them, and it is manifest, that such as
 were baptized, were adult persons and believers
 in Christ. It is not evident in what station of
 life *Lydia* was, whether married or unmarried,
 and whether she had young children or not;
 and if she had, it is not likely they should be
 with her, when at a distance from her native
 place, and upon business; it is most probable,
 that those that were with her, called her household,
 were her servants, that assisted her in her business;
 and it is certain, that when the apostles entered
 her house, those that were there, and who doubt-
 less are the same that were baptized, were called
brethren, and such as were capable of being com-
 forted, *Acts xvi. 15, 40.* and the jailor’s hous-
 hold were such as had the word of God spoken
 to them, and received it with joy, took pleasure
 in the company and conversation of the apostles,
 and believed in God together with him, and so
 were

were adult persons, believers, and very proper subjects of baptism, *Acts*. xvi. 32, 33, 34. *Stephanas* is by some thought to be the same with the jailor; but if he was another person, it is plain his household consisted of adult persons, men called by grace, and who were made use of in publick work; they were the first fruits of *Achaia*, and addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, *1 Cor.* xvi. 15.

The *sixteenth* argument is: "None that truly fear God, can seriously and with certainty say, that there were not many infants among the three thousand baptized by the apostles at once; for the *Jews* were not content with any ordinances without having their children with them; the apostle directs those who were at age to repent, but he commands every one of them to be baptized, and objects nothing against their children, because as he says, the promise was unto them and their children also; and this is a plain command for infant-baptism to all that will judge impartially."

But,—1. a man that carefully reads the account of the baptism of the three thousand, having the fear of God before his eyes, may with the greatest seriousness and strongest assurance affirm, not only that there were not many infants, but that there were not one infant among the three thousand baptized by the apostles; for they were all of them such as were pricked to the heart, and cried out, men and brethren what shall we do? they gladly received the word of the Gospel, joined to the church, and continued stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine, in fellowship and in breaking

^f Let this be observed, in answer to what the author of *the baptism of infants a reasonable service*, &c. has advanced in p. 43.

breaking of bread and prayer ; all which cannot be said of infants.—2. What this author suggests agreeable to what he elsewhere says, that the *Jews* were not pleased with any ordinance unless they had their children with them, is without foundation ; what discontent did they ever shew, at a part of their children being left out of the ordinance of circumcision, and no other appointed for them in lieu of it ? And had they been discontented, what argument can be formed from it ? —3. The distinction between those that were of age, whom the apostle directed to repent, and the *every one* of them whom he commanded to be baptized, has no ground nor reason for it, yea is quite stupid and senseless ; and even according to this writer himself is a distinction without any difference, since the *every one* to be baptized are supposed by him to have children, and so to be at age ; since he adds, “ and objects nothing against their children.” And a clear case it is, that the self-same persons that were exhorted to be baptized, were exhorted to repent, and that as previous to their baptism ; and therefore must be adult persons, for infants are not capable of repentance, and of giving evidence of it.—4. Those words, *the promise is unto you and to your children*, are so far from being a plain command for infant-baptism, that there is not a word of baptism in them, and much less of infant-baptism ; nor do they regard infants, but the posterity of the *Jews*, who are often called *children*, tho’ grown up, to whom the promise of the Messiah, and remission of sins by him, and the pouring out of the Holy Ghost was made ; and are spoken for the encouragement of adult persons only, to repent

repent and be baptized; and belong only to such as are called by grace, and to all such, whether *Jews or Gentiles*.

The *seventeenth* argument is; “ The seed of
 “ believers should be baptized, because the pri-
 “ vileges and blessings which are signified and
 “ sealed in baptism are necessary to their salva-
 “ tion, and there is no salvation without them;
 “ viz. an interest in the covenant of grace, the
 “ remission of original sin, union with Christ,
 “ sanctification of the Holy Spirit, and regene-
 “ ration, without which none can be saved,
 “ *John iii. 5.*” The answer to which is, 1. that
 the things indeed mentioned are necessary to sal-
 vation, and there can be none without them;
 but then baptism is not necessary to the enjoy-
 ment of these things, nor to salvation; a person
 may have an interest in these blessings, and
 be saved, though not baptized; these are things
 necessary to baptism, but baptism is not ne-
 cessary to them; and indeed a person ought
 to have an interest in these, and appear to have
 one, before he is baptized. Wherefore, 2. these
 things are not signified in baptism, and much
 less sealed by it; other things, such as the suf-
 ferings, death, and the resurrection of Christ,
 are signified in it; these, as regeneration, &c.
 are prerequisites unto baptism, and are not com-
 municated by it, or sealed up to persons in it,
 who may be baptized, and yet have no share and
 lot in this matter, witness the case of *Simon Magus*.

The *eighteenth* argument is: “ The children
 “ of the faithful ought to be baptized, because
 “ this lays them under strong obligation to shun
 “ the works of Satan, and many have received
 “ much benefit from hence in their youth.
 “ Comfortable symptoms or signs of a work of
 “ grace,

“ grace, have appeared very early in several,
 “ tho’ perhaps bad company has afterwards cor-
 “ rupted them. Besides infant-baptism keeps up
 “ a general profession of faith and religion, and
 “ makes the word and means of grace of more
 “ virtue and efficacy, than if men had utterly
 “ renounced christianity, and declared them-
 “ selves infidels; and further, it lays a power-
 “ ful obligation on their parents and others, to
 “ teach them their duty, which is a main end
 “ of all the ordinances God has instituted, *Pf.*
 “ lxxviii. 5, 6.” But, 1. is there nothing be-
 sides baptism, that can lay persons under strong
 obligation to shun the works of the Devil? cer-
 tainly there are many things; if so, then it is
 not absolutely necessary on this account; besides,
 tho’ the baptism of adult persons does lay them
 under obligation to walk in newness of life, *Rom.*
vi. 4. yet the baptism of infants can lay them
 under no such obligation as infants, and while
 they are such, because they are not conscious of
 it, nor can it take any such effect upon them.—
 2. What that much benefit or advantage is,
 that many have received from infant-baptism, I
 am at a loss to know, and even what is intended
 by this writer, unless it be what follows, that
 signs of a work of grace have appeared very early
 in several, which may be, and yet not to be as-
 cribed to baptism; baptism has no such virtue
 and influence, as to produce a work of grace in
 the soul, or any signs of it; besides, a work of
 grace has appeared very early in several, and has
 been carried on in them, who have never been
 baptized at all.—3. Infant-baptism keeps up no
 public or general profession of faith or religion,
 since there is no profession of faith and religion
 made

made in it, by the person baptized ; nor is it of any avail to make the word and means of grace powerful and efficacious, which only become so by the spirit and grace of God ; and a wide difference there is between the disuse of infant-baptism, and renouncing christianity, and professing infidelity ; these things are not necessarily connected together, nor do they go together ; persons may deny and disuse infant-baptism, as it is well known many do, and yet not renounce the christian faith, and declare themselves infidels.

—4. Parents and others, without infant-baptism, are under strong obligations to teach children their duty to God and men, and therefore it is not necessary on that account.

The *nineteenth* argument is ; “ The seed of
 “ believers are to be baptized, tho’ they have
 “ not actual faith, since Christ speaks not of
 “ these but of adult persons, *Mark* xvi. 16.
 “ And certain it is they have as much fitness
 “ for baptism as for justification and eternal life,
 “ without which they must all perish ; the Spi-
 “ rit of God knows how to work this fitness in
 “ them, as in grown persons ; *Jeremiah*, *John*
 “ the Baptist, and several others, were sancti-
 “ fied from their mother’s womb, *John* iii. 8, 9.
 “ *Eccl.* xi. 5. *Luke* i. 15, 44. *Jer.* i. 5. *Is.* xlv.
 “ 3. *Pf.* viii. 2.” To which may be returned
 for answer, 1. that if the text in *Mark* xvi. 16.
 speaks not of infants but of adult persons only,
 as it certainly does, I hope it will be allowed to
 be an instruction and direction for the baptism
 of adult believers, and to be a sufficient war-
 rant for our practice.—2. If the infants of be-
 lievers have no more fitness for baptism than
 they have for justification and eternal life, they

have none at all, since they are by nature children of wrath even as others ; and therefore can have none, but what is given them by the Spirit and grace of God.—3. We dispute not the power of the Spirit of God, or what he is able to do by the operations of his grace upon the souls of infants ; we deny not but that he can and may work a work of grace upon their hearts, and clothe them with the righteousness of Christ, and so give them both a right and meetness for eternal life ; but then this should appear previous to baptism ; actual faith itself is not sufficient for baptism without a profession of it ; the man that has it ought to declare it to the satisfaction of the administrator, e're he admits him to the ordinance. See *Acts* viii. 36, 37. 4. Of the several children said to be sanctified from their mother's womb, no proof is given but of one, *John* the Baptist, who was filled with the Holy Ghost from thence, which has been considered in the answer to the *fourteenth* argument ; as for *Jeremiah*, it is only said of him that he was *sanctified*, that is, set apart, designed and ordained in the purpose and counsel of God to be a prophet before he was born ; and is no proof of internal sanctification so early. *Is.* xlv. 3. speaks of the Spirit of God being poured down not upon the carnal seed of believers, but upon the spiritual seed of the church ; and *Psf.* viii. 2. is a prophecy not of new-born infants, but of children grown up, crying *Hosanna* in the temple, see *Matt.* xxi. 15, 16. no argument from a particular instance or two, were there more than they are, is of avail for the sanctification of infants in general ; it should be proved, that all the infant-seed of believers are sanctified by the Spirit

Spirit of God ; for if some only, and not all, how shall it be known who they are ? let it first appear that they are sanctified, and then it will be time enough to baptize them.

The *twentieth* argument is ; “ The children of
 “ believers are to be baptized, because their
 “ right to the covenant and church of God is
 “ established from the first, much clearer than
 “ several other necessary ordinances ; there is
 “ no express command nor example of womens
 “ receiving the Lord’s supper ; no particular
 “ command in the New Testament for family-
 “ worship, and for the observation of the first
 “ day of the week as a sabbath, and yet none
 “ dare call them in question ; and there is no
 “ objection against infant-baptism, but the like
 “ might formerly have been made against cir-
 “ cumcision ; and may now be objected against
 “ many other ordinances and commands of
 “ God.” To which I reply—1. That with re-
 spect to womens receiving the Lord’s supper, it
 is certain, that not only they were admitted to
 baptism, *Acts* viii. 12. and became members of
 churches, *Acts* i. 14, 15. and iv. 37. and v. 9,
 14. *1 Cor.* xi. 5, 6, 13. and xiv. 34, 35. but
 there is an express command for their receiving
 the Lord’s supper, *1 Cor.* xi. 29. where a word
 is used of the common gender, and includes
 both men and women ; who are both one in
 Christ, and in a Gospel church-state, and have
 a right to the same ordinances, *Gal.* iii. 28.—
 2. As to family-worship, that is not peculiar
 to the New Testament-dispensation, as baptism
 is ; it was common to the saints in all ages,
 and therefore needed no express command for
 it under the New ; tho’ what else but an express
 N 2 command

command for it is *Eph. vi. 4?* for can children be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, without family-worship? 3. As to the observation of the first day, tho' there is no express command for it, there are precedents of it; there are instances of keeping it, *John xx. 19, 26. Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.* now, let like instances and examples of infant-baptism be produced if they can: tho' no express command can be pointed at, yet if any precedent or example of any one infant being baptized by *John*, or Christ, or his apostles, can be given, we should think ourselves obliged to follow it—4. That the same objections might be made against circumcision formerly, as now against infant-baptism, is most notoriously false; it is objected, and that upon a good foundation, that there is neither precept nor precedent for infant-baptism in all the word of God; the same could never be objected against circumcision, since there was such an express command of it to *Abraham, Gen. xvii.* and so many instances of it are in the sacred writings; let the same be shewn for infant-baptism, and we have done—5. What the other ordinances and commands of God are, to which the same objections may be made as to infant-baptism, is not said, and therefore no reply can be made.

I have nothing more to do, than to take some little notice of what this writer says, concerning the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism, p. 33. We are no more fond of contentions and strifes about words, than this author, and those of the same way of thinking with himself can be; but surely, modestly to enquire into, and attempt to fix the true manner of administering
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an ordinance of Christ, according to the scriptures, and the instances of it; according to the signification of the word used to express it, and agreeable to the end and design of it; can never be looked upon as a piece of impertinence, or be traduced as cavil and wrangling. And

1st. Since this writer observes, that he don't find that either the sacred scripture, or the church of *England* have expressly determined, whether baptism is to be performed by plunging or sprinkling, but have left the one, and the other, indifferently to our choice; I hope he will not be displeased, that we chuse the former, as most agreeable to the sacred writings, and the examples of baptism in them; as those of our Lord and others in *Jordan*, *Matt. iii. 6, 16*, and in *Amon*, where *John* was baptizing, because there was much water, *John iii. 23.* and of the eunuch, *Acts viii. 36, 37, 38.* and as best representing the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, *Rom. vi. 4, Col. ii. 12.* as well as best suits with the primary sense of the Greek word, βαπτίζω, *baptizoo*, which signifies to plunge or dip. And

2dly. Since, according to this writer, one mode is not more essential to the ordinance than another, but a *reverential* receiving of the sign; it may be asked, what of this nature, viz. a reverential receiving of the sign, the application of the water to the body, signifying the spiritual application of Christ and his gifts to the soul, can be observed in an infant when sprinkled, which is not conscious of what is done to it.

3dly. Whereas, he says, it is not improbable but the apostles baptized by sprinkling, since several were baptized in their houses, *Acts ix.*

17, 18. and xvi. 33. and others, in former times, sick in their beds: it may be replied, that it is not probable that the apostle *Paul* was baptized by sprinkling, *Acts* ix. 17, 18. since had he, he would have had no occasion to have *arose* in order to be baptized, as he is said to do, *Acts* ix. 18. it is most probable, that when he arose off of his bed or chair, he went to a bath in *Judas's* house; or out of the house, to a certain place fit for the administration of the ordinance by immersion; and since there was a pool in the prison, as *Grotius* thinks, where the jailor washed the apostles stripes, it is most probable, that here he and his household were baptized; or since they were brought out of the prison, and after baptism brought into the jailor's house, ver. 33, 34, it is most likely they went out to the river near the city where prayer was wont to be made, and there had the ordinance administered to them, ver. 13. As for the baptism of sick persons in their beds, this was not in the times of the apostles, but in after-times, when corruptions had got into the church, and so deserves no regard.

4thly. In favour of sprinkling, or pouring water in baptism, he urges that it is a sign of the pouring or sprinkling of the Holy Ghost, and of the blood of Christ, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. *Heb.* xii. 24. but it should be observed, that baptism is not a sign or significative of the sprinkling of clean water, or the grace of the Spirit in regeneration, or of the blood of Christ on the conscience of a sinner, all which ought to precede baptism; but of the death, and burial, and resurrection of Christ, which can't be represented in any other way

way than by covering a person in water, or an immersion of him.

5thly. " Water in baptism, he says, is but
 " a sign and seal; a little of it is sufficient to
 " signify the gifts which Christ has purchased,
 " as a small quantity of bread and wine does
 " in the other sacrament, and as a small seal is
 " as much security as a larger one." But as
 baptism is no sign of the things before mention-
 ed, so it is no seal, as we have seen, of the co-
 venant of grace, wherefore these similitudes are
 impertinent to illustrate this matter; and tho'
 a small quantity of bread and wine is sufficient
 in the other sacrament to signify our partaking
 of the benefits of the death of Christ by faith,
 yet a small quantity of water is not sufficient to
 signify his sufferings and death, with his burial
 and resurrection, themselves. And though we
 don't expect benefit from the quantity of the
 water, yet that best expresses the end and design
 of the ordinance.

6thly and lastly, he observes, that sprinkling
 of water on the face, a part of the body, is a
 sign sufficient for the whole; since the nature of
 the soul appears more in it, and often in scrip-
 ture signifies the whole man. But be it so that
 it does, sprinkling water on the face is not a
 sufficient sign for the whole; for this ordinance
 represents a burial, and sprinkling a little water
 is not sufficient for that; the ordinance so per-
 formed cannot be called a burial, or a person
 said to be buried in it; casting a little earth
 upon the face of a corpse, can never be suffi-
 cient for its burial, or be accounted one.

I have now gone through the consideration of the several arguments of this author, with respect both to the subjects and mode of baptism; should he upon reading this answer, and after he has considered the advice of the wise man, *Prov. xxvi. 4, 5.* which he proposes to do, think fit to reply, perhaps, upon the like consideration, a rejoinder may be made to what he shall hereafter offer.



T H E

THE
Dissenters Reasons

For separating from the
Church of *ENGLAND*,

OCCASIONED BY

A LETTER wrote by a *Welch*
Clergyman on *the Duty of*
Cathechizing Children.

Intended chiefly for the use of Dissenters
of the *Baptist* Denomination in *Wales*.

THE
DILIGENCE RECORD
OF THE
CHURCH OF A. A. C. A. A. A.

A LIST OF THE
MEMBERS OF THE
CHURCH OF A. A. C. A. A. A.

THESE ARE THE NAMES OF THE
MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF A. A. C. A. A. A.



THE
DISSENTERS REASONS

For separating from the

CHURCH of *England*.

WHEREAS Dissenters from the church of *England* are frequently charged with schism, and their separation is represented as unreasonable, and they are accounted an obstinate and contentious people ; it may be proper to give some reasons why they depart from the Established church ; by which it will appear that their separation does not arise from a spirit of singularity and contention, but is really a matter of conscience with them ; and that they have that to say for themselves, which will sufficiently justify them, and remove the calumnies that are cast upon them ; and our reasons are as follow.

I. We dislike the church of *England* because of its *Constitution*, which is human, and not divine : it is called the church of *England* as by
O 2 *law*

law Established, not by the law of God, but by the law of man: it is said to be the best constituted church in the world, but we like it never the better for its being constituted by men: a church of Christ ought to be constituted as those were we read of in the *Acts of the Apostles*, and not established by *acts of parliament*; as the articles, worship, and discipline of the church of *England* be; a *parliamentary* church we do not understand; Christ's kingdom or church is not of this world; it is not established on worldly maxims, nor supported by worldly power and policy.

II. We are not satisfied that the church of *England* is a true church of Christ, because of the *form* and order of it; which is national, whereas it ought to be congregational, as the first christian churches were; we read of the church at *Jerusalem*, and of the churches in *Judea* besides; so that there were several churches in one nation; and also of the churches of *Macedonia*, and likewise of *Galatia*, and of the seven churches of *Asia*, which were in particular cities mentioned; yea of a church in an house, which could not be national; there were also the church at *Corinth*, and another at *Cenchrea*, a few miles distant from it, and a sea port of the *Corinthians*. A church of Christ is a congregation of men who are gathered out of the world by the grace of God, and who separate from it and meet together in some one place to worship God; and to this agrees the definition of a church in the 19th Article of the church of *England*, and is this; "The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men:" which is against herself;

herself; for if a congregation, then not a nation; if a congregation, then it must be gathered out from others; and if a congregation, then it must meet in one place, or it cannot with any propriety be so called; as the church at *Corinth* is said to do, 1 *Cor.* xi. 18, 20. and xiv. 23. but when and where did the church of *England* meet together in one place? and how is it the visible church of Christ? where and when was it ever seen in a body together? is it to be seen in the king, the head of it? or in the parliament by whom it was established? or in the upper and lower houses of convocation, its representatives? To say that it is to be seen in every parish, is either to make a building of stone the church, which is the stupid notion of the vulgar people; or to make the parishioners a church, and then there must be as many churches of *England* as there are parishes, and so some thousands, and not one only.

III. We object to the *matter* or materials of the church of *England*, which are the whole nation, good and bad; yea, inasmuch as all the natives of *England* are members of this church, and are so by birth, they must in their original admission or becoming members be all bad; since they are all conceived and born in sin, and great part of them as they grow up are men of vicious lives and conversations; whereas a visible church of Christ ought to consist of *faithful* men, as the above mentioned article declares, that is, of true believers in Christ; and such were the materials of the first christian churches, they were made up of such as were called to be saints, sanctified in Christ Jesus, and faithful brethren
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in him ; as were the churches at *Rome, Corinth, Ephesus* and *Colosse* : these were *churches of saints* ; but the church of *England* is a church of the world, or consists for the most part of worldly men ; and therefore we cannot hold communion with it.

IV. We are dissatisfied with the *doctrine* preached in the church of *England*, which generally is very corrupt, and not agreeable to the word of God ; and therefore cannot be a true church of Christ, which ought to be the pillar and ground of truth ; for the visible church of Christ, as the 19th article runs, is a congregation of faithful men, *in the which the pure word of God is preached* ; of which pure word, the doctrines of grace are a considerable part ; such as eternal election in Christ, particular redemption by him, justification by his imputed righteousness, pardon through his blood, atonement and satisfaction by his sacrifice, and salvation alone by him, and not by the works of men, the efficacy of divine grace in conversion, the perseverance of the saints, and the like ; but these doctrines are scarce ever, or but seldom, and by a very few, preached in the church of *England* : since two thousand godly and faithful ministers were turned out at once, *Arminianism* has generally prevailed ; and scarce any thing else than *Arminian* tenets and mere morality are preached, and not Christ and him crucified, and the necessity of faith in him, and salvation by him ; wherefore we are obliged to depart from such a communion, and seek out elsewhere for food for our souls. And though the 39 articles of the church of *England* are agreeable to the word of God,

a few only excepted, yet of what avail are they, since they are seldom or ever preached, though sworn and subscribed to by all in public office ; and even these are very defective in many things : There are no articles relating to the two covenants of grace and works, to creation and providence, to the fall of man, the nature of sin and punishment for it, to adoption, effectual vocation, sanctification, faith, repentance, and the final perseverance of the saints, nor to the law of God, christian liberty, church-government and discipline, the communion of the saints, the resurrection of the dead, and the last judgment.

V. We dissent from the church of *England*, because the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper are not duly administered in it, according to the word of God, and so is not a regular church of Christ ; for as the above article says, " The visible church of Christ is a congregation " of faithful men, in the which—the sacraments " be duly ministered, according to Christ's own " ordinance, in all those things that of necessity " are requisite to the same : " but the said ordinances are not duly administered in the church of *England*, according to the appointment of Christ ; there are some things which are of necessity requisite to the same, which are not done ; and others which are not of necessity requisite, which are enjoined, and with which we cannot comply.

First, the ordinance of baptism is not administered in the said church, according to the rule of God's word : there are some things used in the administration of it, which are of human invention, and not of Christ's ordination ; and other

other things absolutely necessary to it, which are omitted; and indeed the whole administration of it, has nothing in it agreeable to the institution of Christ, unless it be the bare form of words made use of, *I baptize thee in the name of the Father, &c.*

1. The sign of the cross used in baptism is entirely unscriptural, an human invention, a rite and ceremony which the Papists are very fond of, and ascribe much unto; and indeed the church of *England* makes a kind of a sacrament of it, since the minister when he does it says, that it is done “ in token, that hereafter he (the
“ person baptized) shall not be ashamed to con-
“ fess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully
“ to fight under his banner against sin, the
“ world, and the devil, and to continue Christ’s
“ faithful foldier unto his life’s end :” this is such an human addition to a divine ordinance, as by no means to be admitted.

2. The introduction of sponsors and sureties, or godfathers and godmothers, is without any foundation from the word of God; it is a device of men, and no ways requisite to the administration of the ordinance: besides, they are obliged to promise that for the child, which they cannot do for themselves, nor any creature under heaven; as to renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so as not to follow or be led by them; and constantly believe God’s holy word, and obediently keep God’s holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of his life.

3. The prayers before and after baptism may well be objected to, suggesting that remission of sins and regeneration are obtained this way; and that such as are baptized are regenerated and undoubtedly saved: in the prayer before baptism are these words; " We call upon thee for this
 " infant, that he coming to thy holy baptism,
 " may receive remission of his sins by spiritual
 " regeneration ;" and when the ceremony is performed, the minister declares, " that this
 " child is regenerate, and grafted in the body
 " of Christ's church;" and in the prayer after it, he says, " We yield thee hearty thanks, most
 " merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to
 " regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit :"
 and in the rubrick are these words; " It is cer-
 " tain by God's word, that children which are
 " baptized, dying before they commit actual
 " sin, are undoubtedly saved ;" yea in the catechism, the person catechized is instructed to say, that in his baptism he " was made a mem-
 " ber of Christ, the child of God, and an in-
 " heritor of the kingdom of heaven :"
 which seems greatly to favour the popish notion, that the sacraments confer grace *ex opere operato*, upon the deed done. These are things which give disgust to many dissenters, that are for infant-baptism; but some of us have greater reasons than these against the administration of baptism in the church of *England*; for,

4. The subjects to which it is administered are not the proper ones, namely infants; we don't find in all the word of God, that infants were commanded to be baptized, or that ever any were baptized by *John*, the first administrator of that ordinance, nor by Christ, nor by his
 P apostles,

apostles, nor in any of the primitive churches : the persons we read of, that were baptized in those early times, were such as were sensible of sin, had repentance for it, and had faith in Christ, or professed to have it ; all which cannot be said of infants ; nor can we see, that any argument in favour of infant-baptism can be drawn from *Abraham's* covenant, from circumcision, from the baptism of households, or from any passage either in the Old or New Testament. Moreover,

5. We cannot look upon baptism as administered in the church of *England*, to be valid, or true christian baptism ; because not administered in a right way, that is by immersion, but either by sprinkling or pouring water, which the rubric allows of in case of weakness ; nor do we understand, that it is ever performed in any other way, at least, very rarely ; whereas we have abundant reason to believe, that the mode of immersion was always used by *John* the baptist, and by the apostles of Christ, and by the churches of Christ for many ages.

Secondly, There are many things in the administration of the Lord's supper, which we think, we have reason to object unto, and which shew it to be an undue one : and not to take notice of the bread being ready cut with a knife, and not broken by the minister, whereas it is expressly said, that Christ *brake* the bread, and did it in token of his *broken* body ; nor of the time of administering it at noon, which makes it look more like a dinner, or rather like a breakfast, being taken fasting, than a supper ; whereas to administer it in the evening best agrees with its name,

name, and the time of its first institution and celebration ; but not to insist on these things.

1. Kneeling at the receiving of it is made a necessary requisite to it, which looks like an adoration of the elements, and seems to favour the doctrine of the real presence ; and certain it is, that it was brought in by pope *Honorius*, and that for the sake of transubstantiation and the real presence, his predecessor *Innocent* the III^d. had introduced ; and tho' the church of *England* disavows any such adoration of the elements, and of Christ's corporal presence in them ; yet inasmuch as it is notorious that this has been abused, and still is to idolatry, it ought to be laid aside ; and the rather sitting should be used, since it is a table-gesture, and more suitable to a feast, and was what was used by Christ and his apostles, and by the primitive churches, until transubstantiation obtained ; or however since kneeling at most is but an indifferent rite, it ought not to be imposed as necessary, but should be left to the liberty of persons to use it or not.

2. The ordinance is administered to all that desire it, whether qualified for it or not, and to many that live vitious lives and conversations ; yea the minister when he intends to celebrate it, in the exhortation, which in the book of Common Prayer he is directed to use, says ; “ unto
“ which in God's behalf *I bid you all that are*
“ *here present*, and beseech you for the Lord
“ Jesus Christ's sake, that ye will not refuse to
“ come thereto.” Whereas it cannot be thought, that all present, every one in a publick congregation, or in a parish, are fit and proper communicants ; and there are many persons described in the word of God, we are not to eat with,

1 Cor. v. 11. Yet the rubrick enjoins, “ that
 “ every parishioner shall communicate, at the
 “ least, three times in the year;” and directs,
 “ that new married persons should receive the
 “ holy communion at the time of their marri-
 “ age, or at the first opportunity after it;” tho’
 none surely will say, that all married persons are
 qualified for it.

3. This sacred ordinance is most horridly
 prostituted, and most dreadfully profaned by al-
 lowing and even obliging persons, and these of-
 tentimes some of the worst of characters, to
 come and partake of it as a civil test, to qualify
 them for places of profit and trust; whereas the
 design of this ordinance is to commemorate the
 sufferings and death of Christ, and his love
 therein, to strengthen the faith of christians,
 and increase their love to Christ and one ano-
 ther, and to maintain communion and fellow-
 ship with him and among themselves.

4. This ordinance is sometimes administred
 in a private house, which took its rise from
 laying of private mass, and to sick persons, to
 whom it seems to be given as a *viaticum*, or a
 provision for the soul in its way to heaven, and
 to two or three persons only, and even in some
 cases to a single person; whereas it is a church-
 ordinance, and ought to be administred only in
 the church, and to the members of it.

VI. As the church of *England* has neither the
 form nor matter of a true church, nor is the
 word of God purely preached, and the ordinan-
 ces of the Gospel duly administred in it; so
 neither is it a truly *organized* church, it having
 such ecclesiastical officers and offices in it, which
 are

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are not to be found in the word of God; and which is another reason why we separate from it. The scripture knows nothing of archbishops and diocesan bishops, of archdeacons and deans, of prebends, chantors, parsons, vicars, curates, &c. The only two offices in a christian church are bishops and deacons; the one has the care of the spiritual, the other of the temporal affairs of the church; the former is the same with pastors, elders, and overseers; and such men ought to be of sound principles, and exemplary lives and conversations; and moreover ought to be chosen by the people, nor should any be imposed upon them contrary to their will; this is an hardship, and what we cannot submit to; and it is a reason of our separation, because we are not allowed to chuse our own pastors.

VII. The church of *England* has for its *head* a temporal one, whereas the church of Christ has no other head but Christ himself. That our lawful and rightful sovereign king *George* is head of the church of *England*, we deny not; he is so by act of *parliament*, and as such to be acknowledged; but then that church can never be the true church of Christ, that has any other head but Christ; we therefore are obliged to distinguish between the church of *England* and the church of Christ. A woman may be, and has been head of the church of *England*, but a woman may not be head of a church of Christ, since she is not allowed to speak or teach there, or do any thing that shews authority over the man, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 34, 35. 1 *Tim.* ii. 11, 12.

VIII. The want of *discipline* in the church of *England* is another reason of our dissent from it. In a regular and well ordered church of Christ, care is taken that none be admitted into it, but such as are judged truly gracious persons, and of whom testimony is given of their becoming conversations; and when they are in it, they are watched over, that their walk is according to the laws and rules of Christ's house; such as sin, are rebuked either privately or publickly, as the nature of the offence is; disorderly persons are censured and withdrawn from; profane men are put out of communion, and hereticks after the first and second admonition are rejected: but no such discipline as this is maintained in the church of *England*. She herself acknowledges a want of godly discipline, and wishes for a restoration of it, which is done every *Lent* season, and yet no step taken for the bringing of it in: what discipline there is, is not exercised by a minister of a parish, and his own congregation, tho' the offender is of them, but in the bishop's court indeed, yet by laymen; the admonition is by a sett of men called apparitors, and the sentence of excommunication and the whole process leading to it by lawyers, and not ministers of the word.

IX. The *rites* and *ceremonies* used in the church of *England* are another reason of our separation from it. Some of them are manifestly of pagan original; some favour of *Judaism*, and are no other than abolished *Jewish* rites revived; and most, if not all of them, are retained by the papists; and have been, and still are, abused to idolatry and superstition. Bowing to the east was an idolatrous

latrous practice of the heathens, and is condemned in scripture as an abominable thing, *Ezek.* viii. 15, 16. Bowing to the altar is a relick of popery, used by way of adoration of the elements, and in favour and for the support of transubstantiation, and the real presence; and therefore by no means to be used by those that disbelieve that doctrine and must be a hardening of such that have faith in it. Bowing, when the name of Jesus is mentioned, is a piece of superstition and will-worship, and has no countenance from *Phil.* ii. 10. The words should be rendered *in*, and not *at* the name of Jesus; nor is it in *the name Jesus*, but in *the name of Jesus*, and so designs some other name, and not Jesus, and a name given him after his resurrection, and not before, as the name of Jesus was at his birth; and besides some are obliged to bow in it, who have no knees in a literal sense to bow with, and therefore bowing of the knee cannot be meant in any such sense. And as for such ceremonies which in their own nature are neither good nor bad, but indifferent, they ought to be left as such, and not imposed as necessary; the imposition of things indifferent in divine service as necessary, as if without which it could not be rightly performed, is a sufficient reason why they ought not to be submitted to: such and such particular garments worn by persons in sacred office, considered as indifferent things, may be used or not used; but if the use of these is insisted on as being holy and necessary, and without which divine worship cannot rightly be performed, then they ought to be rejected as abominable. Nor can we like the surplice ever the better for being brought in by pope *Adrian*, A. D. 796. The cross in baptism,
and

and kneeling at the Lord's supper, have been taken notice of before.

X. The book of *Common Prayer* set forth as a rule and directory of divine worship and service, we have many things to object to.

1. In as much as it prescribes certain stinted set forms of prayer, and ties men up to the use of them: we don't find that the apostles of Christ, and the first churches, used any such forms, nor christians for many ages; and of whatever use it can be thought to be unto persons of weak capacities, surely such that have spiritual gifts, or the gift of preaching the Gospel, can stand in no need of it, and who must have the gift of prayer; and to be bound to such pre-composed forms, as it agrees not with the promise of the spirit of grace and supplication, so not with the different cases, circumstances, and frames that christians are sometimes in; wherefore not to take notice of the defectiveness of these prayers, and of the incoherence and obscurity of some of the petitions in them; the frequent tautologies and repetitions, especially in the litany, so contrary to Christ's precept in *Matt. vi. 7.* are sufficient to give us a distaste of them.

2. Tho' we are not against reading the scriptures in private and in publick, yet we cannot approve of the manner the liturgy directs unto; namely, the reading it by piece-meals, by bits and scraps, so mangled and curtailed as the Gospels and Epistles are: we see not why any part of scripture should be omitted; and the order of these being an invention of a Pope of *Rome*, and the fixing them to mattins and

even-songs smelling so rank of popery, no ways serve to recommend them to us: not to take notice of the great impropriety of calling passages out of *Isaiab*, *Jeremiab*, *Joel*, *Malachi*, and the *Acts* of the apostles, by the name of Epistles: but especially it gives us much uneasiness to see lessons taken out of the *Apocrypha*, and appointed to be read as if of equal authority with the sacred scriptures; nay not only out of the books of *Baruch*, *Wisdom*, and *Ecclesiasticus*, but out of the histories of *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Susanna*, *Bel and the dragon*, and such lessons out of them as contain the most idle and fabulous stories.

3. The book of common prayer, enjoins the reading of the book of *Psalms* in the corrupt translation of the *Vulgate Latin*, used by the papists; in which there are great omissions and subtractions in some places; as every where, the titles of the *Psalms* are left out, and in all places these words *Higgaion* and *Selah*; and the last verse of *Pf.* lxxii. and in others, there are manifest additions, as in *Pf.* ii. 12. and iv. 8. and xiii. 6. and xxii. 1, 31. and xxxix. 12. and cxxxii. 4. and cxxxvi. 27. and cxlvii. 8. and three whole verses in *Pf.* xiv. whereas nothing should be taken from, nor added to the word of God; some sentences are absurd and void of sense, as *Pf.* lviii. 8. and lxviii. 30, 31. and in others the sense is perverted, or a contrary one given, as in *Pf.* xvii. 4. and xviii. 26. and xxx. 13. and cv. 28. and cvi. 30. and cvii. 40. and cxxv. 3. This translation of the *Psalms* stands in the *English* liturgy, and is used and read in the churches in *England*.

4. It directs to the observation of several fasts and festivals, which are no where enjoined in the

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word of God, and for which it provides collects, gospels and epistles to be read: the fasts are, *Quadragesima* or *Lent* in imitation of Christ's forty days fast in the wilderness, *Ember weeks*, *Rogation days*, and all the *Fridays* in the year; in which men are commanded to abstain from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving. The festivals, besides the principal ones, *Christmas*, *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*, are the several saints days throughout the year; which are all of popish invention, and are either moveable or fixed as the popish festivals be; and being the relicks of popery makes us still more uneasy and dissatisfied with them.

5. Besides the corruptions before observed in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, in the order for the visitation of the sick stands a form of absolution, which runs thus; "And by his (Christ's) authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" which is a mere popish device; Christ having left no such power to his church, nor committed any such authority to any sett of men in it; all that the ministers of Christ have power or authority to do, is only ministerially to declare and pronounce, that such who believe in Christ shall receive the remission of sins, and that their sins are forgiven them, and that such who believe not shall be damned.

6. It appoints some things merely civil, as ecclesiastical and appertaining to the ministry, and to be performed by ecclesiastical persons and ministers, and provides offices for them, as,

1. Matrimony; which seems to favour the popish notion of making a sacrament of it; whereas

whereas it is a mere civil contract between a man and a woman, and in which a minister has nothing to do; nor do we ever read of any priest or levite, that was ever concerned in the solemnization of it between other persons, under the Old Testament, or of any apostle or minister of the word, under the New; not to say any thing of the form of it, or of the ceremonies attending it.

2. The burial of the dead; which is a mere civil action, and belongs not to a gospel-minister, but to the relations of the deceased or other neighbours, friends and acquaintance, *Matt. viii. 21, 22. Acts. viii. 2.* nor is there any necessity for a place to be consecrated for such a purpose. *Abraham* and *Sarah* were buried in a cave, *Deborah* under an oak, *Joshua* in a field, *Samuel* in his house, and *Christ* in a garden, *Gen. xxiii. 9. and xxxv. 8. Josh. xxiv. 30. 1 Sam. xxv. 1. John. xix. 41.* nor do the scriptures ever make mention of any service being read, or of any divine worship being performed at the interment of the dead; and was any thing of this kind necessary, yet we must be obliged to object unto, nor could we comply with, the service used by the church of *England* on this occasion; we cannot in conscience call every man and woman, our *dear brother*, or our *dear sister*, as some who have lived vicious lives, and have not appeared to have had true repentance towards God or faith in *Christ*, have been called; or commit their bodies to the ground in *sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life*; since we know there will be a resurrection to damnation as well as to eternal life; nor can we give thanks to God on account of many, that it has pleased him to

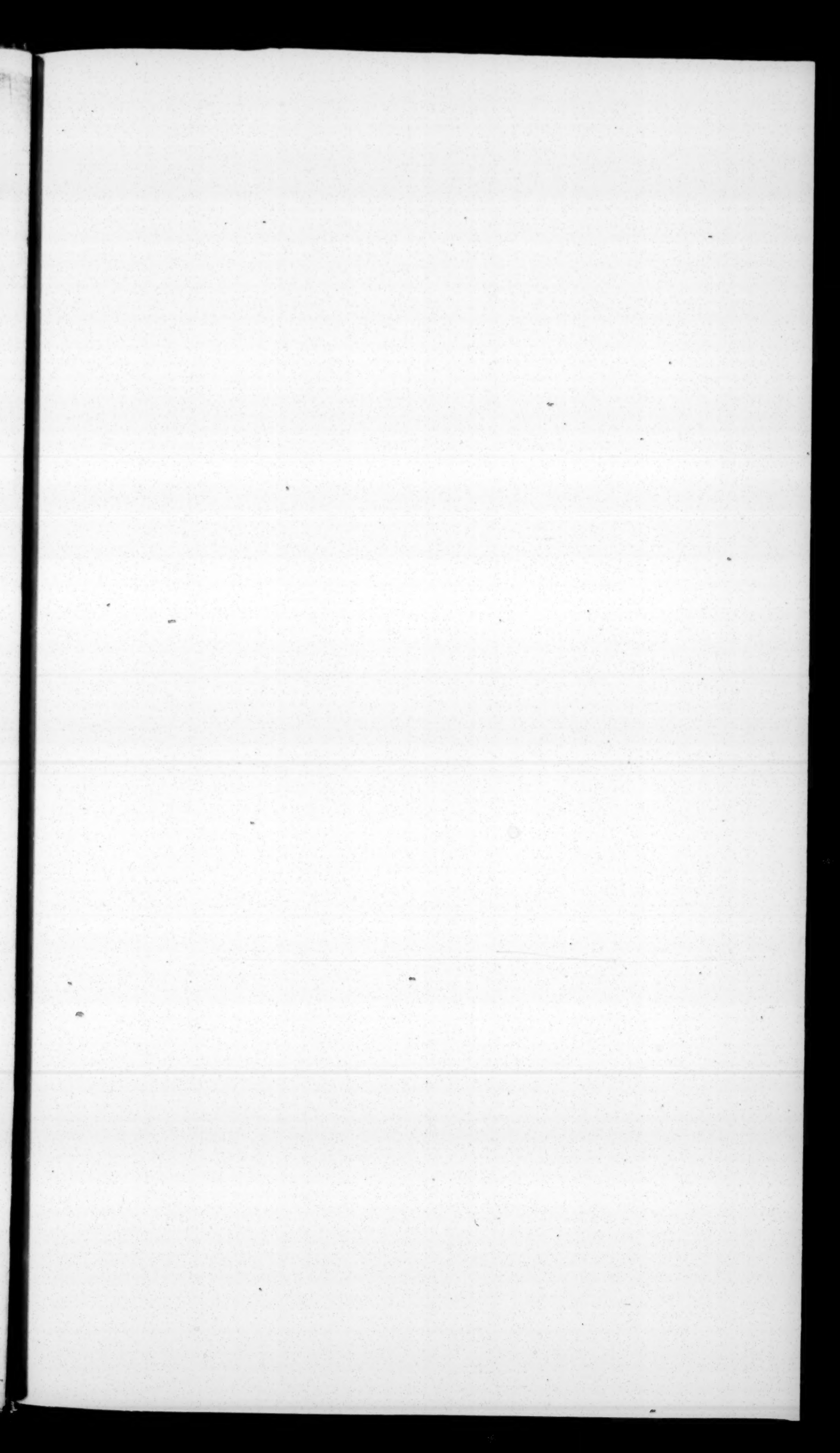
deliver them out of the miseries of this sinful world; nor join in the following petition, which seems to favour the popish notion of praying for the dead; *beseeking—that we with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, &c.*

XI. We cannot commune with the church of *England*, because it is of a persecuting spirit; and we cannot think such a church is a true church of Christ: that the *Puritans* were persecuted by it in *Queen Elizabeth's* time, and the Dissenters in the reign of *King Charles the second*, is not to be denied; and tho' this spirit does not now prevail, this is owing to the mild and gentle government of our gracious Sovereign *King George*, the head of this church, for which we have reason to be thankful; and yet it is not even now quite clear of persecution, witness the Test and Corporation-acts, by which many free-born *Englishmen* are deprived of their native rights, because they cannot conform to the church of *England*; besides, the reproaches and revilings which are daily cast upon us, from the pulpit and the press, as well as in conversation, shew the same: and to remove all such calumnies and reproaches, has been the inducement to draw up the above reasons for our dissent; and which have been chiefly occasioned by a late letter on the duty of *catechizing children*, in which the author, not content highly to commend the church of *England*, as the purest church under heaven, but reflects greatly on dissenters, and particularly on such whom he calls *rebaptizers*; and repeats the old stale story of the *German anabap-*
tists

tists, and their errors, madneffes and distractions; and most maliciously insinuates, that the people who now go by this name are tinctured with erroneous principles; for he says, they spread their errors in adjacent countries, which are not fully extinguished to this day; whereas they are a people that scarce agree with us in any thing; neither in their civil nor in their religious principles, nor even in baptism itself; for they were for the repetition of adult-baptism in some cases, which we are not, and used sprinkling in baptism, which we do not; the difference between them and us, is much greater than between the papists and the church of *England*; and yet this letter-writer would think it very hard and unkind in us, should we rake up all the murders and massacres committed by *Pædobaptists*, and that upon principle, believing that in so doing, they did God good service; I mean the *Papists*, who are all *Pædobaptists*; and yet this might be done with as much truth and ingenuity, as the former story is told: and besides, the disturbances in *Germany* were begun by *Pædobaptists*; first by the *Papists* before the reformation, and then by *Lutherans* after it, whom *Luther* endeavoured to dissuade from such practices; and even the disturbances in *Munster* were begun by *Pædobaptist* ministers, with whom some called *Anabaptists* joined, and on whom the whole scandal is laid. But what is all this to us, who as much disavow their principles and practices, as any people under the heavens? nor does our different way of thinking about baptism, any ways tend to the same.

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